January 1st day 1774

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William Rogers

Husbandry Spiritualiz'd:

OR, THE

Heavenly Uſe of Earthly Things.

CONSISTING

Of many Pleaſant Obſervations, Pertinent Applications, and Serious Reflections; and each Chapter concluded with a Divine and Suitable *POEM.*

Directing Husbandmen to the moſt Excellent Improvements of their common Imployments.

Whereunto are added, by way of *Appendix*, ſeveral Choice *Occaſional Meditations*, upon *Birds*, *Beaſts*, *Trees*, *Flowers*, *Rivers*, and ſeveral other Objects; fitted for the help of ſuch as deſire to Walk with God in all their Solitudes and Receſſes from the World.

Hoſ. 12. v. 10. *I have uſed Similitudes by the Miniſtry of the Prophets.*

Gen. 24. v. 63. *And* Iſaac *went out to Meditate in the Fields.*

The Seventh Edition, Corrected.

By *JOHN FLAVELL*, late Miniſter of the Goſpel in *Dartm.*

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George Smith
Mary Crawley
1243

THE

Epiſtle Dedicatory.

To the Worſhipful Robert Savery, *and* William Savery, *of* Slade, *Eſq.*

Honoured Friends,

IT hath been long ſince obſerv'd, That the World below is a Glaſs to diſcover the World above; *Seculum eſt ſpeculum.* And although I am not of their opinion that ſay, The *Heathens* may ſpell Chriſt out of the Sun, Moon, and Stars; yet this I know, That the irrational and inanimate, as well as rational Creatures, have a Language; and though not by Articulate Speech, yet in a Metaphorical Senſe, they preach unto Man the Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs of God, *Rom.* 1. 20. *There is* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſalm 19. 3.) *no ſpeech, nor language where their voice is not heard.* Or (as *Junius* renders) there is no Speech, nor Words, yet without theſe their voice is underſtood; and their Line (*i. e.* ſaith *Diodate*)

their writing in groſs and plain draughts, is gone out through all the Earth.

As Man is compounded of a fleſhly and ſpiritual ſubſtance, ſo God hath endowed the Creatures with a ſpiritual as well as fleſhly uſefulneſs; they have not only a natural uſe in Alimental and Phyſical reſpects, but alſo a ſpiritual uſe, as they bear the figures and ſimilitudes of many ſublime and heavenly Myſteries. Believe me (ſaith contemplative *Bernard*) thou ſhalt find more in the Woods, than in a corner; Stones and Trees will teach thee what thou ſhalt not hear from Learned Doctors. By a skilful and induſtrious improvement of the Creatures (ſaith Mr. *Baxter* excellently) we might have a fuller taſte of Chriſt and Heaven, in every bit of Bread that we eat, and in every draught of Beer that we drink, than moſt Men have in the uſe of the Sacrament.

And as the Creatures teach divine and excellent things, ſo they teach them in a perſpicuous and taking manner: *Duo illa nos maxime movent, ſimilitudo, & exemplum*, ſaith the Orator; Theſe two things, ſimilitude and example, do eſpecially move us. Notions are more eaſily conveyed to the underſtanding, by being

Cicero.

being firſt cloathed in ſome apt ſimilitude, and ſo repreſented to the ſenſe. And therefore Jeſus Chriſt the great Prophet, delighted much in teaching by Parables; and the Prophets were much in this way alſo, *Hoſ.* 12. 10. *I have uſed ſimilitudes by the Miniſtry of the Prophets.* Thoſe that can retain little of a Sermon, yet ordinarily retain an apt Similitude.

I confeſs it is an humbling Conſideration, That Man, who at firſt was led by the knowledge of God to the knowledge of the Creature, muſt now by the Creatures learn to know God: That the Creatures (as one ſaith) like *Balaam*'s Aſs, ſhould teach their Maſter. But though this be the unhappineſs of poor Man in his collapſed ſtate, yet it is now his wiſdom to improve ſuch helps; and whilſt others, by the abuſe of the Creatures, are furthering their Perdition, to be, by the Spiritual Improvement of them, promoting our own Salvation.

It's an excellent Art to diſcourſe with Birds, Beaſts and Fiſhes, about ſublime and ſpiritual Subjects, and make them anſwer to our queſtions; yet this may be done, *Job* 12. 7, 8: *Ask now the Beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee, and the Fowls of the Air, and they ſhall tell thee; or ſpeak to the Earth, and it*

ſhall teach thee, and the Fiſhes of the Sea ſhall declare unto thee. That is (ſaith neat and accurate *Caryl*) the Creatures teach us when we think of them; "They teach us, though not formally, yet virtually; they anſwer and reſolve "the Queſtion put to them, though not explicitely to the Ear, yet convincingly to "the Conſcience. So then, we ask the Creatures, when we diligently conſider them, "when we ſearch out the Perfections and "Virtues that God hath put into or ſtampt "upon them. To ſet our mind thus upon "the Creature, is to diſcourſe with the Creature; the Queſtions which Man asks of a "Beaſt, are only his own Meditations. Again, the Creatures teach us, when we in "Meditation make out Collections, and "draw down a demonſtration of the Power, "Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of God in making "them, or of the frailty of Man in needing "them: Such Concluſions and Inferences, "are the teachings of the Creatures.

Caryl in loc.

Common objects (ſaith another) may be improved two Ways; *viz,* In an Argumentative, and in a Repreſentative Way; by reaſoning from them, and by viewing the reſemblance that is betwixt them and ſpiritual Matters.

Dr. Manton.

Firſt

Firſt, In Meditation argue thus, as in the preſent caſe and ſimilitude of the Apoſtle; If an Husbandman upon the ordinary Principles of Reaſon can wait for the Harveſt, ſhall not I wait for the coming of the Lord, The day of Refreſhing? the Corn is precious to him, and ſo is the coming of Chriſt to me. Shall he be ſo patient, and endure ſo much for a little Corn? And not I for the Kingdom of Heaven? He is willing to ſtay till all cauſes have had their operations, till he hath received the former and the latter Rain, and ſhall not I, till the Divine Decrees be accompliſhed?

Secondly, In Meditation, make the reſemblance, and diſcourſe thus within your ſelves: This is my Seed-time, Heaven is my Harveſt; here I muſt labour and toyl, and there reſt. I ſee the Husbandman's Life is a great toyl; no excellent thing can be obtained without labour, and an obſtinate patience. I ſee the Seed muſt be hidden in the furrows, rotten and corrupted, e'er it can ſpring forth with any encreaſe. Our hopes are hidden, light is ſown for the righteous; all our comforts are buried under the clods, and after all this there muſt be long waiting, we cannot ſow and reap in a d[illegible]y; effects cannot follow, till all neceſſary cauſes

have first wrought. 'Tis not in the power of Husbandmen to ripen Fruits at pleasure, our times are in the hands of God, therefore 'tis good to wait; a long-suffering patience will reap the desired Fruit. Thus you have some hints of this heavenly Art of improving the Creatures.

Navigation Spiritualized.

The Motives inducing me to this undertakement, was the Lord's owning, with some success, my labours of a like nature, together with the desire and inclination (stirr'd up in me, I hope, by the Spirit of the Lord, to devote my vacant hours to his service in this kind.) I considered, that if the *Pharisees* in a blind Zeal to a Faction, could compass Sea and Land to Proselyte Men to their Party, though thereby they made them sevenfold more the Children of the Devil than before: How much more was I obliged, by true love to God, and zeal to the Everlasting Happiness of Souls, to use my utmost endeavours, both with *Seamen* and *Husbandmen* to win them to Christ, and thereby make them more than seventy-seven-fold happier than before? Not to mention other incouragements to this Work, which I received from the earnest desires of some Reverend and Worthy Brethren inviting thereunto; all

which

which I hope the event will manifeſt to be a Call from God to this Work.

I confeſs I met with ſome diſcouragement in my firſt attempt, from my unacquaintedneſs with rural Affairs; and becauſe I was to travel in a path (to me) untrodden; but having once engaged in it, thoſe diſcouragements were ſoon overcome; and being now brought to what you here ſee, I offer to your hands theſe firſt-fruits of my ſpare hours.

I preſume you will account it no diſparagement, that I dedicate a Book of Husbandry to Gentlemen of your Quality. This is *Spiritual Husbandry*, which is here taught you; and yet I muſt tell you, that great Perſons have accounted that Civil Employment (which is much inferiour to this) no diſparagement to them. *The King himſelf is ſerved by the field*, Eccl. 5. 9. Or as *Montanus* renders the *Hebrew* Text, *Rex agro ſit ſervus*; The King himſelf is a Servant to the Field. And of King *Uzziah* it is written, (*2 Chron.* 26. 10.) *That he loved Husbandry.* And *Amos* 7. 1. we read of the *King's Mowings*. Yea, *Pliny* hath obſerved, That Corn was never ſo plentiful at *Rome*, as when the ſame Men Tilled the Land that Rul'd the Commonwealth. *Quaſi gauderet terra laureato vomere;*

vomere, scilicet & aratore triumphali; As though the Earth it self rejoyced in the Laurell'd Plow-share, and the Triumphant Plowman.

What pleasure you will find in reading it, I know not; but to me it hath been a pleasant path, from first to last; who yet have been at far greater expence of time and pains in compiling it, than you can be in reading it. The Husbandman's work, you know, is no easie work and the Spiritualizing of it hath greater difficulties attending it; but yet the pleasure hath abundantly recompenced the pains. I have found *Erasmus* his Observation experimentally true; *Qui literis, addicti sumus, animi lassitudinem a studiis gravioribus contractam; ab iisdem studiis, sed amenioribus recreamus*; Those that are addicted to study, (saith he) when they have weari'd their Spirits with study, can recreate them again with study, by making a diversion from that which is severe and knotty, to some more facile and pleasant Subject.

But to hear that God hath used and honoured these Papers to the good of any Soul, will yield me the highest content and satisfaction imaginable.

May you but learn that Lesson, which is the general scope and design of this Book,

viz.

viz. How to walk with God from day to day, and make the ſeveral Objects you behold, *Scalæ & alæ*, Wings and Ladders to mount your Souls nearer to him, who is the Center of all bleſſed Spirits. How much will it comfort me, and confirm my hope, that it was the Call of God indeed, which put me upon theſe endeavours!

O Sirs! What an excellent thing would it be for you, to make ſuch holy improvements of all theſe earthly Objects which daily occur to your ſenſes, and cauſe them to proclaim and preach to you Divine and Heavenly Myſteries; whilſt others make them groan, by abuſing them to Sin, and ſubjecting them to their Luſts. A Man may be caſt into ſuch a condition, wherein he cannot enjoy the bleſſing and benefit of a pious and powerful Miniſtery; but you cannot (ordinarily) fall into ſuch a condition, wherein any thing (except a bad heart can deprive you of the benefits and comforts of thoſe excellent Sermons, and Divinity Lectures, which the Creatures here offer to preach and read to you.

Content not your ſelves, I beſeech you, with that natural ſweetneſs the Creatures afford; for thereof the Beaſts are capable, as much, if not more, than you; but uſe them

them to those Spiritual ends you are here directed, and they will yield you a sweetness far transcending that natural sweetness you ever relished in them; and indeed, you never use the Creatures as their *Lord's* till you come to see *your Lord* in and by them. I confess the discoveries of God in the Word are far more excellent, clear and powerful; *He hath magnified his Word above all his Name.* And therein are the unsearchable *Riches of Christ*, or rich discoveries of that Grace that hath no footsteps in nature, as the Apostle's expression signifies, *Eph.* 3. 8.

And if that which might be known of God by the Creatures, leave Men without excuse; as it's manifest, *Rom.* 1. 20. How inexcuseable then will those be, who have received not only the teachings of the Creature, but also the Grace of the Gospel in vain! *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* They that are careless in the Day of Grace, shall be speechless in the Day of Judgment.

I am sensible of many defects in these Papers, (as well as in my self;) they have doubtless a taste of the distractions of the Times wherein they were written; nor was I willing to keep them so long under-hand as the accurateness and exactness with which

such

such a subject ought to be handled, did require. Had I designed my own Credit, I should have observed that Counsel—— *Nonnumque prematur in annum*, (*i. e.*) To have kept it much longer under the File, before I had exposed in to the publick view; but I rather inclined to *Solomon*'s Counsel, *Whatever thy hand finds out to do, do it with all thy might*; *for there is no wisdom, nor knowledge, nor device in the grave, whither thou art going*, Eccles. 9. 10.

I apprehend a necessity of some such means to be used, for the instruction and conviction of Countrey People; who either are not capable of understanding Truth in another Dialect, or at least, are less affected with it. The *Proposition* in every Chapter consists of an Observation in Husbandry; wherein, if I have failed in using any improper expression, your Candour will cover it, and impute it to my unacquaintedness in rural Affairs—— *In magnis voluisse sat est.*

The *Reddition*, or Application, you will find (I hope) both pertinent and close. The *Reflections* serious, and such (as I hope) your Consciences will faithfully improve. I have shut up every Chapter with a *Poem*, an innocent Bait to catch the Readers Soul.

That

That of *Herbert* is experimentally true.

A Verse may find him that a Sermon flies,
And turn Delight into a Sacrifice.

I should never have been perswaded (especially in this scribling Age, wherein we may complain with the Poet,

Scribimus indocti, doctiq; poemata passim.)

To have set my dull Fancy upon the Rack to extort a Poem to entertain my Reader; for I cannot say with *Ovid Sponte sua carmen, &c.* but that I have been informed, that many Seamen induced by the pleasure of a Verse, have taken much pains to learn the *Poems* in their *Compass* by heart; and I hope both the Children at home, and the Servants in the Fields, will learn to exercise themselves this way also. O, how much better will it be so to do, than to stuff their Memories with obscene Ballads, and filthy Songs, which corrupt their Minds, and dispose them to much wickedness, by irritating their natural corruption! But these are purer Flames, you will find nothing here of such a tendency.

'Tis guilt, not Poetry, to be like those
Whose Wit in Verse is downright sin in Prose:
Whose studies are Prophaneness, as if then
They only were good Poets when bad men.

D. Digs.

I shall add no more, but to beg that God, who instructeth the Husbandman in his civil Calling, to teach him wisdom spiritually to improve it; and particularly, that you may reap a Crop of much Spiritual Benefit, from that Seed which is here sown by the hand of the Lord's unprofitable Servant, and in him.

Your very Affectionate

Friend and Servant,

John Flavel.

TO THE

Chriſtian READER.

THere are three things wherein (as it hath been ſaid, long before my day) the exerciſe of Godlineſs doth chiefly conſiſt: Prayer, Temptation, Meditation; Meditation is the Subject of this following Manual. The Object of Meditation is twofold. Firſt, The Word. Secondly, The Works of God. The Works of God are twofold. Firſt, Internal. Secondly, External. The External Works of God are twofold. Firſt, Of Creation. Secondly, Of Providence. The Works of Providence are likewiſe twofold. Firſt, In things Civil, the Lord ordering and over-ruling all the Affairs and Motions of ſingle Perſons, Families and Nations, in a ſubſerviency to his own moſt holy Ends, Deſigns and Purpoſes. Secondly, In things Natural, the Lord inſtructing the Husbandman to diſcretion, and teaching him how to Dreſs and Till the Earth, that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater; as alſo how to breed up and manage the Beaſts of the Field

Field, both greater and lesser Cattel, for the use and service of Man.

Meditation upon this lower part of the Works of God, and his wonderful Providences about them, may raise our Souls very high; and while we wisely consider these natural things, we may grow more and more wise in and for Spirituals and Eternals.

The worthy and ingenuous Author of the ensuing Discourse, hath supplied us with an excellent help, for the Spiritualizing of the Providential Works of God in natural things, by godly Meditations; we chiefly want the help of the Holy Spirit (without which all other helps and helpers are altogether insufficient) to frame and wind up our hearts, for this both profitable and delightful duty; yet the help which the Lord is pleased to give us for our direction in it, by the Ministry of Man, is not only not to be refused, but thankfully received and improved; and all little enough to bring our minds to, or keep them at this work: The best of Saints (on this side Heaven) have (though they are not earthly-minded) much Earth in their minds; which like a heavy clog at their heels, or a weight at their hearts, presseth them down when they would make an essay to mount upward in Meditation. We find it no easie matter to keep off earthly thoughts, when we are most seriously engaged in heavenly

Work;

Work; how hard is it then to get in, and be fixed upon heavenly Thoughts, while we are engaged about earthly Work; yea, are (for so is the Husbandman) working the very earth, and raking in the Bowels of it. 'Tis a great part of our holiness to be spiritually-minded, while we are conversing with God through Jesus Christ in Spiritual Duties; but to be spiritually-minded, and to mind Spiritual Things, when we are conversing with the clods of the Earth, and the furrows of the Field; when we have to do with Corn and Grass, with Trees and Plants, with Sheep and Oxen; when we behold the Birds and Fowls of the Air, the Worms, and all that creep upon the ground; then (I say) to be spiritually-minded and thence to have our Thoughts ascending and soaring up to God, in heart-affecting and quickning Contemplations, witnesseth an high degree of Holiness, and of gracious Attainments. To make a Ladder out of earthly materials, for the raising of our selves in Spirit up to Heaven, is the Art of Arts. Holy and happy indeed are they who (being taught of God) have learned this Art, and live in the daily practice of it. Earthly Objects usually hinder us in our way, sometimes turn us quite out of our way to Heaven. Many plow and sow, dig and delve the Earth, till their Hearts become as earthly as the Earth it self. Many deal about the Beasts of

the Field, till themſelves become even brutiſh. Is it not then a bleſſed deſign which this Author aims and drives at, ſo to ſpiritualize all ſorts, or the whole compaſs of earthly Husbandry, that all ſorts of Husbandmen may become Spiritual and Heavenly? It ſeems to me a token for good, that God hath an intendment of ſome ſpecial good to the Souls of ſuch as are by Profeſſion proper Husbandmen, ſeeing he hath lately put it into the Hearts of two faithful Miniſters (who with all of that Profeſſion, are Husbandmen in a figure) to undertake, though in a different way, this Subject, and to publiſh their Labours in Print, that they may be of uſe, not only for the preſent Age, but for Poſterity.

Mr. *Richard Steel*, and this Author.

And that the Husbandman may be pleaſed, as well as profited, in peruſing the Labours of this Author; he hath, with ſingular aptneſs and acuteneſs, contrived and contracted the ſum or ſcope of every Chapter into an Elegant Diſtich, or pair of Verſes, placed at the head of it, and concluded it with a choice melodious Poem ſuitable to, and dilating upon the whole matter of it. Theſe the Husbandman, who can but read, may quickly learn and ſing for his ſolace, inſtead of thoſe vain Ballads and corrupting Rhimes, which many of that Rank are apt to buy, and ſolace themſelves withal, without any benefit, yea, much

to

to their hurt, making their hearts more corrupt, carnal and vain thereby.

Let me add one word more to the Reader. This Book of Husbandry Spiritualized, *is not calculated only for the common Husbandman Persons of any Calling or Condition, may find the Author working out such searching reflections and strong Convictions, from almost every part and particular of the Husbandman's work as may prove, if faithfully improved, very useful to them; to some for their awakening to consider the state of their Souls, whether in Grace or in Nature; to others for their Instruction Consolation and Encouragement in the ways of Grace, as also for their proficiency and growth in those ways. That the blessing of the Lord, and the breathings of his good Spirit may go out with it, for all those gracious purposes, is the heart's desire and prayer of him, who is,*

Christian Reader,

A sincere Well-wisher to thy Precious and Immortal Soul,

JOSEPH CARTE

To his Reverend and Learned Friend, Mr. *John Flavell*, on his Spiritual Navigation, and Husbandry

Letters of Mart to his dear Servant given,
By him that fists the ruffling winds of Heaven,
To fight, and take all such as would not dain
To acknowledge him the Seas great Soveraign;
He lanch'd his little Pinace, *and began*
To attaque the vassals of Leviathan:
Suspicious gales swelling his winged Sails,
Searches all Creeks, and every Bark he hails;
That scarce a Ship our Western Coast afford,
Which this brave Pinace *hath not laid aboard.*
And what among our riddles some might count,
Was seen at once at Barwick, *and the* Mount;
Yea, in more Ports *hath in one* lustre *been,*
Than Hawkins, Drake, *or* Cavendish *have seen.*
And Prizes of more worth brought home again,
Than all the Plate-Fleets *of the King of* Spain.
But that which makes the wonder swell the more,
Those whom he took were Beggars *all before.*
But rests he here? No, no, our Friend doth know,
'Tis good to have two strings unto his Bow.
Our rare Amphibion *loves not to be pent*
Within the bounds of one poor Element.
Besides, the Learned Author understood,
That of an idle hand there comes no good.

The

The Law to him no Pulpit *doth allow,*
And now he cannot Preach, *he means to* Plow.
Though Preaching were a Crime, yet he foreſaw
Againſt the Plowman there could be no Law.
Nor ſtays he on reſolves, but out of hand
He yoaks his Teem, plows up the ſtubborn Land:
Sows it with precious Seed, harrows again
The tougher clods, takes pleaſure in his pain.
Whilſt Orpheus *like, (which doth his Art Advance)*
Rocks, Fields, and Woods, after his pipe do dance.

Induſtrious Spirit, to what a rich account
With thy bleſt Lord, will all theſe Labours mount?
That every nerve of thy beſt Soul doſt ply,
To further Heaven's Spiritual Husbandry.
This kind of Tillage which thou teacheſt us,
Was never dreamt of by Triptolemus.
Go, Reader, turn the leaves; and me allow
To Pray (whilſt at my work) God ſpeed the Plow

NICHOLAS WATTS

In Authoris OPERA.

LET Paracelſus *and* Van-Helmont's *Name*,
No more ride triumph on the wings of Fame.
Lo, here's a Chymiſt, *whoſe Diviner skill*
Both hallowed, *from unhallowed things diſtil.*
Spiritualizeth Sea-affairs, agen,
Makes the rude ground turn tutor unto Men.
Shews Mariners, *as by a Compaſs, how*
They may unto the Port *of Glory row.*
Teacheth the Plowmen, *from their Work, to know*
What Duties unto God, and Man they owe.
Rare Artiſt! VVho, when many Tongues are mute,
Mak'ſt things, that are Inanimate, confute
The Ages ſins: by Preaching unto eyes,
Truths, which, in other Modes, their Eaſe deſpiſe.
Proſper his Pious Labours, Lord! howe'r
Do not forget to Crown the Labourer.

Sic raptim canit,

DAN. CONDY.

TO

To his Reverend and Invaluable Friend Mr. J. F. upon his *Husbandry Spiritualiz'd.*

INgenious Sir, What do I see? What now?
Are you come from the Pulpit to the Plow?
If so, then pardon me, if I profess,
The Plow deserves to be sent to the Press.
'Tis not long since you went to Sea, they say,
Compos'd a Compass, which directs the way,
And steers the course to Heaven, O blest Art!
And bravely done, that you did that impart
To us, who take it kindly at your hand,
And bless the Lord that you are come to Land,
To be an Husbandman, wherein your skill
With admiration doth your Readers fill.
One grain will yield increase, it's ten times ten
When the Earth's Manur'd by such Husbandmen.
We may expect rich Harvests, and full Crops,
When Heavenly Dew descendeth in such Drops
Of Spiritual rain, to water every Field,
That it full heaps of Grace to God may yield.
I must adore the Wisdom of that God
That makes Men wise, who, even from a clod
Of Earth, can raise such Heavenly Meditation
Unto a pitch of highest elevation.
Besides, I mark the goodness of the Lord,
Performing unto us his faithful Word,

That all ſhall work for good unto the Saints,
Which, in ſome meaſure, leſſens our complaints.
For though our Pulpit-mercies be grown leſs,
We have ſome gracious helps yet from the Preſs.
And herein all the World may plainly ſee,
That faithful Servants will not idle be.
We have ſome Bricks, although the Straw be gone,
The Church, at laſt, ſhall be of poliſht ſtone.
What-ever Men or Devils act, or ſay;
Sion, at laſt, will have a glorious Day.

The wretched Muck-worm that from morn to night,
Labours, as if 'twere for an heavenly weight;
And, when he hath got all he can, the moſt
Amounts to little more than a poor Cruſt
To feed his tired Carcaſe, if himſelf
Have, by his carking, got a little Pelf,
Leave it he muſt, to one he knows not whom,
And then muſt come to an eternal doom;
And hear his poor neglected wretched Soul
Tell him, at laſt, that he hath play'd the Fool.
But here he's taught, how he, before he dye,
May lay up Treaſure for Eternity,
Wherein he may be rich, yea, much much more
Than they that do poſſeſs whole mines of Oar.
When Earths more worth than Heaven, and Gold than Grace,
Then let the Worldling run his brutiſh Race,
But not before, unleſs he do intend
To meet with Soul-deſtruction in the end.

But I muſt leave him, and return again
To gratulate the Author for his pain.
And here I can't forbear to let my Pen
To tell the World of all the Husbandmen,

That e're I meet, he, he hath hit the vein
To recompence the Labourer's hard pain,
And taught him how to get the greateſt gain.
Wherein he treads a path not trod before,
By which indeed his skill appears the more.
I might Encomiums *give him, great and true,*
And yet come very ſhort of what's his due.
But I muſt not walk in forbidden ways
For, thereby, I'm ſure I ſhould diſpleaſe
His pious Mind, who doth, and freely can
Give all the Praiſe to the great Husbandman,
Who will his graces in his Servants own,
But doth expect himſelf to wear the Crown.
Farewel, dear Sir, I take my leave, and now,
Will ſay no more than this, God ſpeed the Plow.

EDWARD JEFFERY.

THE

THE EPISTLE TO THE Intelligent Countrey *READER*.

THOu haſt here the Fruit of ſome of my ſpare Hours, which were thus imployed, when by a ſad Providence I was thruſt from the Society of many dear Friends, into a ſolitary Countrey Dwelling. I hope none will envy me theſe innocent delights, which I made out of my lonely walks, whereby the Lord ſweetned my Solitudes there. 'Tis like thou wilt find ſome paſſages here, that are harmleſly pleaſant; yet, I aſſure thee, I know of none that the moſt *Cynical Reader* can cenſure, as ſinfully light and vain. I muſt acknowledge, to the Praiſe of God, that I have found ſome of thoſe (which poſſibly ſome of my Readers will call the ſlighteſt and moſt

Triffling ſubjects of Meditation) to be the Ordinances for *Inſtruction*, *Caution* and *Conſolation* to my own Soul: Yea, ſuch a degree of comfort, I do profeſs to have found by theſe things, as hath much endeared the Countrey Life to me, and made me much better to underſtand that ſaying of *Horace*, than when I learn'd it at School,

Noviſtine locum potiorem rure beato?
Eſt ubi plus tepeant hyemes? ubi gratior aura?
Orus, quando te adſpiciam? quandoque licebit
Nunc veterum libris, nunc ſomno, & inertibus hor-
Ducere ſolicitæ jucunda oblivio vitæ. (*i.e.*) (*tis*

What life can with the Country life compare?
Where breath's the pureſt and moſt healthful Air.
Where undiſturb'd, my ſtudies I purſue;
And when I ſleep, bid all my cares adieu.
Hor. Sat. 6.

And what I have found ſo beneficial to my ſelf, I cannot but think may be ſo to others. I aſſure thee, Reader, I am not fond of any of theſe conceptions; and yet I think I may modeſtly enough ſay, That the emptieſt leaf in this Book, may ſerve for more and better uſes than a meer diverſion, when thou canſt find leiſure to peruſe it. I know, your

Troubles

Troubles and Cares are many, and though your Condition of Life hath many innocent Comforts, and outward Mercies to ſweeten it, yet I believe moſt of you have found, that ancient ſaying of *Anacreon* experimentally true. Ἔχει τὶ πικρὸν τῆς γεωργίας γλυκύ.

Some bitter troubles Countreymen do meet,
Wherewith the Lord doth intermix their ſweet.

The *Cares* of your *Minds*, are commonly no leſs than the *Pains* of your *Bodies*; it concerns you therefore, to *ſweeten* what you cannot *avoid*; and I know no better way for that than what is here directed to. O Friends! What advantages have you for a Spiritual Life? Why may you not have two Harveſts every year? One for your Souls, another for your Bodies; if you could thus learn to husband your Husbandry. Methinks Spiritual Meditations do even put themſelves upon you: Husbandmen of old were generally preſumed to be honeſt and good Men; what elſe means that ſaying of *Menander*, Ἀγεωργὸς εἶναι πρόσποιῆ πόνερος ὤν.

Profeſs thy ſelf an Husbandman,
And wicked too! Believe't that can:

What

What you are, godly or wicked, is not for me (that am a ſtranger to moſt of you) to determine; but if you are not godly, it's my deſire and deſign to make you ſo; and I could not think on a more probable means to accompliſh this honeſt deſign, than what I have here uſed. Methinks it ſhould be a pleaſure to you, when you come weary out of the Fields from Plow, or any other Labour, to ſit down in the Evening, and Read that Chapter which concerns that particular buſineſs, and *refreſh* your *Souls* even from that which hath *wearied* your *Bodies*. Were your Hearts but Heavenly, and more time allowed for Spiritual Husbandry, your inward Comforts would be much more, and your outward Gains not a jot leſs; for if the ſucceſs of all your Civil Labours and Imployments depend upon the pleaſure and will of God, (as all that are not Atheiſts do acknowledge) then certainly your buſineſs can ſucceed never the worſe, for your endeavours to pleaſe him, upon whoſe pleaſure it ſo entirely depends. I have many times lifted up my Heart to Heaven, whilſt theſe Papers were under my Hand, for a ſpecial Bleſſing to accompany them, when they ſhould be in yours. If the Lord accompliſh

my

my deſires by them upon your Souls, you ſhall enjoy two Heavens, one here, and another hereafter. Would not that be ſweet? The *Hiſtorian* tells us, that *Altitius Serarius* was ſowing Corn in the Field, when *Q. Cincinnatus* came to him bare-headed, with Letters from the *Senate*, ſignifying that he was choſen to the Dictatorſhip. I hope the Lord will ſo bleſs and ſucceed theſe Labours, that many of you will be called from holding the *Plow* on Earth, to wear the *Crown* of Glory in Heaven; which is the ſincere deſire of

Your hearty Well-wiſher,

JOHN FLAVELL.

THE

THE

Author to the READER.

COme you, whoſe liſt'ning Ears do even itch,
To hear the way preſcrib'd of growing rich;
I'll ſhew you how to make your Tenements
Ten thouſand times more worth, and yet your Rents
Not rais'd a Farthing; here my Reader ſees,
A way to make his dead and barren Trees
Yield precious Fruit, his Sheep, though ne'er ſo bad,
Bear Golden Fleeces, ſuch ne'er Jaſon *had,*
In every thing your gain ſhall more than double,
And all this had with far leſs toyl and trouble.
Methinks I hear thee ſay, this cannot be,
I'll ne'er believe it; well, Read on, and ſee,
Reader, hadſt thou but ſenſes exercis'd
To judge aright; were Spiritual Things but priz'd
At their juſt value, thou wouldſt quickly ſay,
'Tis ſo indeed; thou wouldſt not go thy way
Like one that's diſappointed, and ſo fling
The Book aſide, I thought 'twas ſome ſuch thing.
Time was when Countrey Chriſtians did afford,
More hours and pains about God's Holy Word;
Witneſs the Man who did moſt gladly pay
For ſome few Leaves his whole Cart-load of Hay.
And time ſhall be when Heavenly Truths that warm
The Heart, ſhall be preferr'd before your Farms.
When Holineſs, as Sacred Scripture tells,
Shall be engraven on the Horſes Bells.
Lord, haſten on thoſe much deſired times,
And, to that purpoſe, bleſs theſe rural Rhimes.

T. H.

THE PROEM.

I COR. 3. 9.

Ye are God's Husbandry.

THE ſcope and deſign of the following Chapters, being the Spiritual Improvement of Husbandry, it will be neceſſary by way of *Proem*, to acquaint the Reader with the Foundation and general Rules of this Art in the Scriptures, thereby to procure greater reſpect unto, and prevent prejudice againſt Compoſures of this kind.

To this end I ſhall entertain the Reader a little while upon what this Scripture affords us, which will give a fair Introduction to the following Diſcourſe.

The Apoſtle's ſcope in the context being to check and repreſs the vain-glory and emulation of the *Corinthians*, who inſtead of thankfulneſs for,

and an humble and diligent improvement of the excellent Bleſſings of the Miniſtry, turn'd all into vain Oſtentation and Emulation, one preferring *Paul*, and another *Apollos*, in the mean time depriving themſelves of the Choice Bleſſings they might have received from them both.

To Cure this growing miſchief in the Churches, he checks their vanity, and diſcovers the evil of ſuch Practices, by ſeveral Arguments, amongſt which this is one,

Ye are God's Husbandry, q. d.

What are ye, but a Field, or plot of ground, to be manured and cultivated for God? And what are *Paul*, *Apollos*, and *Cephas*, but ſo many Workmen and Labourers, imployed by God, the great Husbandman, to plant, and water you all?

If then you ſhall glory in ſome, and deſpiſe others, you take a ready way to deprive your ſelves of the Benefits and Mercies you might receive from the joint Miniſtry of them all. God hath uſed me to plant you, and *Apollos* to water you; you are obliged to bleſs him for the Miniſtry of both, and it will be your ſin if you deſpiſe either. If the Workmen be diſcouraged in their Labours, 'tis the Field that loſes and ſuffers by it; ſo that the Words are a Similitude, ſerving to illuſtrate the Relation,

1. Which the Churches have to God.
2. Which God's Miniſters have to the Churches.

1. The relation betwixt God and them, is like that of an Husbandman to his Ground or Tillage. The Greek Word ſignifies God's * *Arable*, or that plot of ground which *God* manures by the Miniſtry of Paſtors and Teachers.

* *Fideles vocantur Dei γηόπεγιον, quia a Deo per paſtores, tanquam arvum excoluntur.* Rav.

3. It ſerves to illuſtrate the Relation that the Miniſters of Chriſt ſuſtain to the Churches, which is like that of the Husband's Servants to him, and his Fields, which excellent notion carries in it the perpetual neceſſity of a Goſpel-Miniſtry. (For what Fruit can be expected, where there are none to Till the ground?) As alſo the diligence, accountableneſs, and rewards, which theſe Labourers are to give to, and receive from God, the great Husbandman. All runs into this,

That the Life and Imployment of an Husbandman, excellently ſhadows forth the relation betwixt God and his Church, and the relative Duties betwixt its Miniſters and Members.

Or more briefly thus.

The Church is God's Husbandry, about which his Miniſters are imployed.

I ſhall not here obſerve my uſual Method, (intending no more but a Preface to the following Diſcourſe) but only open the particulars wherein the Reſemblance conſiſts: And then draw ſome Corollaries from the whole. The firſt I ſhall diſpatch in theſe Twenty Particulars following.

1. *Prop.* The Husbandman purchaſes his Fields, and gives a valuable Conſideration for them, *Job* 32. 9, 10.

Reſ. So hath God purchaſed his Church with a full valuable Price, even the precious Blood of his own Son, *Acts* 20. 28. *Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed, or acquired with his own Blood.* O dear bought Inheritance, how much doth this beſpeak its worth? Or rather, the high eſteem God hath of it, to pay down Blood, and ſuch Blood for it; never was any Inheritance bought at ſuch a rate: Every particular Elect Perſon, and none but ſuch are comprehended in this Purchaſe, the reſt ſtill remain in the Devil's right. Sin made a forfeiture of all to Juſtice, upon which Satan entred and took Poſſeſſion, and as a ſtrong Man armed, ſtill keeps it in them, *Luke* 11. 21. but upon payment of this ſum to Juſtice, the Elect (who only are intended in this Purchaſe) paſs over into God's right and property, and now are neither Satan's, *Acts* 26. 18. nor their own, 1 *Cor.*6.19. but the *Lord's peculiar*, 1 Pet.2.6. And to ſhew how much they are his own, you have two *poſſeſſives* in one Verſe, *Cant.* 8. 12. *My vineyard, which is mine, is before me. Mine, which is mine.*

Prop. Husbandmen divide and ſeparate their own *Lands* from other *mens*, they have their Landmarks and Boundaries, by which property is preſerved, *Deut.* 27. 17. *Prov.* 22. 28.

Reſ. So are the People of God wonderfully ſeparated, and diſtinguiſht from all the People of the Earth, *Pſalm* 4. 3. *The Lord hath ſet apart him that is godly for himſelf, and the Lord knoweth who are his*, 2 Tim 2. 19 It is a ſpecial Act of Grace, to be incloſed by God out of the waſte howling Wilderneſs of the World, *Deut.* 33. 16. This God did

did *intentionally*, in the decree before the World was; which decree is executed in their Sanctification and Adoption.

3. *Prop.* Corn-fields are carefully fenced by the Husbandman with Hedges and Ditches, to preſerve their Fruits from Beaſts that would otherwiſe over-run and deſtroy them —— *Non minus eſt virtus quam querere parta tueri.* It is as good Husbandry to keep what we have, as to acquire more than we had.

Reſ. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and he fenced it, Iſa. 5. 1, 2. No Inheritance is better defended and ſecured, than the Lord's Inheritance, *Pſal.* 125. 2. *As the mountains are round about* Jeruſalem, *ſo the Lord is round about his People.* So careful is he for their ſafety *that he createth upon every dwelling place of mount* Sion, *and upon her Aſſemblies, a cloud and ſmoke by Day, and the ſhining of flaming fire by night: For upon all the glory ſhall be a defence*, Iſa. 4. 5. Not a particular Saint, but is hedged about and incloſed in arms of Power and Love, *Job* 1. 10. *Thou haſt made a hedge about him.* The Devil fain would, but by his own Confeſſion could not, break over that hedge to touch *Job*, till God's Permiſſion made a gap for him: Yea, he not only makes an hedge, but a wall about them, and that of Fire, *Zech.* 2. 5. *Sets a guard of Angels to encamp round about them that fear him*, Pſal. 34. 7. And will not truſt them with a ſingle guard of *Angels* neither, though their power be great, and love to the Saints as great; but watches over them himſelf alſo, *Iſa.* 27. 2, 3. *Sing ye unto her a vineyard of red wine, I the Lord do*

keep it, I will water it every moment; leſt any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.

4. *Prop.* Husbandmen carry out their Compoſt; to fertilize their Arable ground, they dung it, dreſs it, and keep it in heart; and in theſe Weſtern Parts are at great Charges to bring Lime, and Salt-water Sand to quicken their thin and cold Soil.

Reſ. Lord, let it alone this Year alſo, till I ſhall dig about it and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well, if not, cut it down, Luke 13. 8. O the rich dreſſing which God beſtows upon his Churches! They are coſtly Fields indeed, dreſt and fertilized, not only by precious Ordinances and Providences, but alſo by the Sweat, yea, Blood of the Diſpenſers of them. "You *Londoners* (ſaith Mr. *Lockier* in *Coloſ.* p. 552) "are Trees watered choicely indeed; 'tis ſtoried "of the Palm-tree, that at its firſt tranſplanting "into *Italy*, 'twas watered with *Wine*, I cannot ſay "(ſaith he) that you have been ſo watered by me, "I dare not; but this I can humbly and truly ſay, "that if our choiceſt Strength and Spirits may be "named inſtead of Water, Wine; or if the bleſſing which hath gone along with theſe Waters, "at any time, hath turned them into Wine, in "vigour upon your Souls; then hath God by me, "watered your Roots with Wine.

5. *Prop.* The Husbandman builds his Houſe, where he makes his Purchaſe, dwells upon his Land, and frequently viſits it; he knows, that ſuch as dwell far from their *Lands*, are not far from *loſs*.

Reſ.

Reſ. So doth God; where-ever he plants a Church, there doth he fix his Habitation, intending there to dwell, *Pſal.* 46. 5. *God is in the midſt of her, ſhe ſhall not be moved.* Thus God came to dwell upon his own Fee and Inheritance, in *Judea*, *Levit.* 26. 11, 12. *And I will ſet my Tabernacle amongſt you, and will be your God, and ye ſhall be my People.* Which Promiſe is again renewed to his Churches of the New Teſtament, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. And when the Churches ſhall be in their greateſt flouriſh, and purity, then ſhall there be the fulleſt and moſt glorious manifeſtation of the *Divine* preſence among them, *Rev.* 21. 3. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven, ſaying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and be their God.* Hence the Aſſemblies are called, the places of his Feet——And there they *behold the beauty of the Lord*, Pſalm 27.

6. *Prop.* Husbandmen grudge not at the Coſt they are at for their Tillage; but as they lay out vaſt Sums upon it, ſo, they do it chearfully.

Reſ. And now, O inhabitants of Jeruſalem, *and men of* Juda, *judge I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard; what could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?* And as he beſtows upon his Heritage, the choiceſt Mercies, ſo he doth it with the greateſt chearfulneſs; for he ſaith, *Jer.* 32. 41. *I will rejoice over them, to do them good; and I will plant them in this Land aſſuredly, with my whole heart, and with my whole ſoul.* It is not the giving out of Mercy (ſaith one) that grieveth God, but the recoiling of his Mercies back again upon him by the Creature's ingratitude.

7. *Prop.* When Husbandmen have been at Coſt and Pains about their Husbandry, they expect fruit from it, anſwerable to their pains and expences about it: *Behold* (ſaith *James*) *the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the Earth*, Jam. 5. 7.

Reſ. And he looked that it ſhould bring forth fruit, Iſa. 5. 2. This heavenly Husbandman waits for the Fruits of his Fields alſo; never did any Husbandman long for the deſired Harveſt, more than God doth for the fruits of Holineſs from his Saints; great are the Expectations of God from his People: *And when the time of the fruit drew near, he ſent his Servants to the Husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.*

8. *Prop.* Husbandmen are much delighted, to ſee the ſucceſs of their Labours, it Comforts them over all their hard pains, and many weary days, to ſee a good increaſe.

Reſ. Much more is God delighted, in beholding the flouriſhing Graces of his People; it pleaſes him to ſee his Plants laden with Fruit, and his Valleys ſing with Corn, *Cant.* 6. 2. *My Beloved is gone down to the garden, into his beds of Spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather Lillies.* Theſe Beds of Spices (ſay Expoſitors) are the particular Churches, the Companies of Believers; he goes to feed in theſe Gardens, like as Men go to their Gardens to make merry, or to gather Fruit, *Cant.* 4. 16. *He eats his pleaſant fruit, viz.* His peoples holy performances, ſweeter to him than any *Ambroſia*; thus he feeds in the

Paſcitur Chriſtus quando ſuorum virtutes vidit, lilia decerpit quando optimum quemque ex hac vita traducit. Trap. *in loc.*

the Gardens, and he gathers Lillies when he tranſlates good Souls into his Kingdom above; *For the Lord taketh pleaſure in his Saints, and will beautifie the meek with Salvation.*

9. *Prop.* The Husbandman is exceedingly grieved, when he ſees the hopes of a good Crop diſappointed, and his Fields prove barren, or blaſted.

Reſ. So the Lord expreſſes his grief for, and anger againſt his People, when they bring forth no Fruits, or wild Fruits, worſe than none, *Hoſ.* 9. 16. Ephraim *is ſmitten, their root is dried up.* Chriſt was exceedingly diſpleaſed with the Fig-tree, and Curſed it for its barrenneſs; it grieves him to the Heart when his Servants return to him with ſuch Complaints as theſe, *We have laboured in vain, we have ſpent our ſtrength for nought.*

10. *Prop.* Husbandmen imploy many Labourers to work in their Fields, their is need of many hands for ſuch a multiplicity of buſineſs.

Reſ. God hath diverſity of Workmen alſo in the Churches, whom he ſends forth to labour in his Spiritual Fields, *Eph.* 4. 12. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts; and ſome Paſtors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry*; Amos. 3. 7. *I have ſent* [*my Servants*] *the Prophets.* 'Tis uſual with the Apoſtles to place this Title of Servant among their honourary Titles, though a profane Mouth once called it, *Probroſum artificium*, a ſordid Artifice. Chriſt hath ſtampt a great deal of dignity upon his Miniſters, in retaining them for the neareſt ſervice to himſelf, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. *Let a man ſo account of us, as the Miniſters of Chriſt*; they are workers

together with God: The Husbandman works in the Field among his Labourers, and the great God disdaineth not to work in and with his poor Servants, in the work of the Ministry.

11. *Prop.* The work about which Husbandmen imploy their Servants in the Field, is toylsome and spending. You see they come home at night as weary as they can draw their Legs after them.

Ref. But God's Workmen have a much harder task than they. Hence are they set forth in Scripture by the laborious Ox, 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. *Rev.* 4. 7. Some derive the word Διάκονος, ἀ κόνις, *Deacon* from a word that signifies dust, to shew the laboriousness of their Imployment, labouring till even choaked with dust and sweat. 'Tis said of *Epaphraditus*, Phil. 2. 13. *That for the work of Christ he was sick, and nigh unto death; not regarding his life, to supply their lack of service.* The Apostle's expression, *Col.* 1. *ult.* is very emphatical, *Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working; which worketh in me mightily.* The word Ἀγωνιζομενός signifies such spending labour as puts a Man into an Agony; and blessed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

12. *Prop.* The immediate end of the Husbandmans labour, and his Servants labour, is for the improvement of his Land, to make it more nourishing and fruitful.

Ref. The scope and end of the Ministry is for the Church's benefit and advantage. They must not lord it over God's heritage, as if the Church were for them, and not they for the Church; nor serve themselves of it, but be the *Church's* Servants for

for Jeſus ſake, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. the power they have received being for Edification, and not for Deſtruction, 2 *Cor.* 10. 8. Chriſt hath given them to the Churches; their Gifts, their Time, their Strength, and all their Miniſterial Talents are not their own, but the Churches Stock and Treaſure.

13. *Prop.* The Workmen that labour in the Fields, are accountable for their Work to him that imploy'd them.

Ref. Church-Officers are alſo accountable to God for all the Souls committed to them. They are Stewards of the Myſteries of God, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. and Stewards are accountable. *We watch for your Souls* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *as they that muſt give an account*, Heb. 13. 7. If theſe Servants be unfaithful in their work and truſt, the Blood of Souls ſhall be required at their hands, *Ezek.* 3. 17, 18. which are *fulmina, non verba*, (ſaith *Eraſmus*) thunder-bolts, rather than words. The guilt of Blood is the greateſt guilt; and of all *Blood*, the *Blood* of Souls.

14. *Prop.* Thoſe that ſpend their time and ſtrength all their days, in manuring, and plowing the Fields, do maintain themſelves and their Families by their Labours; their hands are ſufficient for themſelves and theirs.

Ref. Even ſo hath God ordained, that they which preach the Goſpel, ſhould live of the Goſpel, 1 Cor. 9. 14. *The workman is worthy of his meat*, Mat. 10. 10. 'Tis a ſad thing, if thoſe who break the Bread of Life to Souls, ſhould be ſuffered to want Bread themſelves. God would not have the Mouth of the Ox muzled that treads out the Corn, but have liberty to eat, as well as work: Yet if any pretender

pretender to the Miniſtry be like the Heifer that loves to tread out the Corn (*i. e.*) cares to do no work, but ſuch as brings in preſent pay; he therein ſufficiently diſcovers his Beaſt-like diſpoſition. Miniſters muſt be faithful in their Maſter's work, and if Men do not, God will reward them. For, *He is not unrighteous to forget their work, and labour of love*, Heb. 6. 10.

15. *Prop.* It is a great trouble to Husbandmen in a buſie time, to be put off from their labours by ſtormy Weather, which drives them out of the Fields, and makes them let all lye, till it clear up again: Yet, mean-while, they are not idle, but imploy themſelves in home-work.

Reſ. Even ſo in God's Husbandry, 'tis an unſpeakable Affliction to God's Workmen, to be rendred uſeleſs and unſerviceable to the Churches, by thoſe ſtorms of trouble, which drive them from their publick Miniſterial Work. With what a heavy heart did *Paul* go off from his Work at *Epheſus*, *Acts* 20. It ſpends a Miniſter to preach, but more to be ſilent. 'Tis a loud ſpeaking Judgment, when God ſhall ſay to them as to *Ezekiel*, *Son of Man, I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou ſhalt be dumb*, Ezek. 3. 26. Such ſilencing Providences, ſpeaking thundring Language to gracious Hearts; yet even then, the keepers of the Vineyard have a private Vineyard of their own to look after, they have much home-work when no out-work.

16. *Prop.* There is a vaſt difference betwixt thoſe Fields which have been well husbanded, and dreſt by a skilful and diligent Husbandman; and thoſe

thoſe that have been long out of Husbandry. How fragrant is the one? How dry and barren the other? When you paſs by a Field well dreſſed and fenced, every thing proſperous, and in exquiſite order, you may know without farther enquiry, that a good Husband lives there.

Reſ. Thus ſtands the caſe betwixt thoſe places which God hath bleſt with a faithful painful Miniſtry, and ſuch as have none, or worſe than none: For as the Husbandman's coſt and pains appears in the verdant, and fragrant hew of his Fields; ſo a Miniſter's pains and diligence is (ordinarily) ſeen in the heavenly Lives, and flouriſhing Graces of the People. The Churches of *Corinth* and *Theſſalonica*, where *Paul* and other holy *Inſtruments* ſpent much of their time and pains, became famous and flouriſhing Churches, 2 *Cor.* 9. 2. A ſpecial bleſſing comes along with a godly Miniſter, to the place where ſpecial Providence aſſigns him. Such places like *Gideon*'s Fleece, have the Dew of Heaven lying on them, whilſt others round about are dry and barren.

17. *Prop.* The Husbandman is not diſcouraged, though the *Seed* lye long under the clods, he knows it will ſpring up at laſt, and reward him, or thoſe that comes after him, for their pains and patience in waiting for it.

Reſ. Miniſters ſhould not be preſently diſcouraged in their work, becauſe they ſee but little or no appearance of all the Seed they have ſown among the People. *The ſervant of the Lord muſt be patient towards all, waiting if at any time God will give them repentance*, 2 Tim. 24. 25. And if it never ſpring

up

up in his time, it may after his death; and if ſo, he ſhall not fail of his reward, *John* 4. 36, 37. *And he that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that ſoweth, and he that reapeth may rejoice together; and herein is that ſaying true, one ſoweth, and another reapeth.* Though Miniſters die, yet their Words live; yea, their Words take hold of Men when they are in the Duſt, *Zech.* 1. 6.

18. *Prop.* Husbandmen find low Grounds and Valleys moſt fertile. Hills, how loftily ſoever they over-top the lower grounds, yet anſwer not the Husbandman's pains, as the Valleys do. Theſe are beſt watered and ſecured from the ſcorching heat of the Sun.

Ref. Experience ſhews us, that the humbleſt Saints are moſt fruitful under the Goſpel. *Theſe are they that receive with meekneſs the ingrafted word*, *James* 1. 21. whoſe influences abide in them, as the Rain doth in the low Valleys. Happy is that Miniſter whoſe Lot falls in ſuch a pleaſant Valley. *Bleſſed are they that ſow beſide all ſuch waters, that ſend forth thither the foot of the ox and the aſs*, Iſa. 32. 20. Among theſe Valleys run the pleaſant Springs, and purling Brooks, which fertilize the Neighbouring ground. Heavenly Ordinances there leave fruitful influences.

19. *Prop.* The firſt Crop is uſually the beſt; and the longer the Husbandman Tills his ground, the leſs it produces. After a few years its vigour and ſtrength is ſpent.

Ref. The firſt Entertainment of the Goſpel is commonly the beſt; and what good is done by the Miniſtry,

Miniſtry, is often done at its firſt entrance. New things are pretty, and very taking. *John at firſt was to the* Jews *a burning and a ſhining light, and they were willing* [*for a ſeaſon*] *to rejoice in his light*, John 5. 35. *Paul* was highly valued among the *Galatians* at firſt: Such was their Zeal, that they could have pluckt out their Eyes, and have given them to him; but how quickly did this full Tide ebb again? For he complains, *Gal.* 4. 15. *Where then is the bleſſedneſs ye ſpake of?*

20. *Prop.* Laſtly, When Fields prove barren, and will not quit the Husbandman's coſt, nor anſwer the Seed he ſows in them, he plucks up the Hedges, and laies it waſte.

Reſ. So when Churches grow formal and fruitleſs, the Lord removes his Goſpel-preſence from them; plucks up the Hedge of his protection from about them, and lays them open, as waſte ground, to be over-run by their Enemies, *Jer.* 7. 12. *Go to* Shiloh, *and ſee what I did unto it.* What is become of thoſe once famous and flouriſhing *Churches* of *Aſia?* Are they not laid waſte, and trodden down by *Infidels?* And now go to (ſaith the great Husbandman) *I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will pull up the hedge thereof, and it ſhall be laid waſte*, Iſa. 5. 5.

Thus you ſee the Allegory opened in its particulars: From the whole, I ſhall preſent you with theſe five enſuing *Corollaries.*

The Firſt Corollary.

How great then are the dignities and priviledges of the Churches of Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath appropriated

priated to himself, above all the People of the earth, to be his peculiar inheritance? The rest of the World is a waste Wilderness; all other places, how pleasant soever, in respect of their natural amœnity and delights, are truly enough called the dark places of the Earth; dismal, solitary Cells, where *Ziim* and *Iim*, *Bitterns*, *Cormorants*, and every doleful Creature dwells. But the Church is the Paradise of the Earth, *a Garden enclosed*, Cant. 4. 12. in whose Hedges the Gospel-birds chirp and sing melodiously, *Cant.* 2. 12. Its Beds, are Beds of Spices, *Cant.* 6. 2. and betwixt its pleasant Banks, a Chrystal River of living Water runs, *Rev.* 22. 1. the Streams whereof make glad the City of God, in the midst thereof the *Lord* himself *delights* to walk. O *Sion!* With what *Pleasures* dost thou abound! If *Bernard* were so ravished with the delights of his *Monastery*, because of its green Banks, and shady Bowers, and Herbs, and Trees and various Objects to feed his Eyes, and fragrant Smells, and sweet and various tunes of *Birds*, together with the opportunities of devout Contemplation, that he cried out admiringly, *Lord! What delights dost thou provide, even for the poor!* How much more should we be ravished with *Sion*'s glory? For *beautiful for Scituation, is mount* Sion. Of whom it may much more truly be said, what a Chronicler of our own once said of *England*, That it is the Fortunate Island, the Paradise of Pleasure, the Garden of God, whose Valleys are like *Eden*, whose Hills are as *Lebanon*, whose Springs are as *Pisgah*, whose Rivers are as *Jordan*, whose Wall is the *Ocean*, and whose Defence

Speed's Chron.

fence is the Lord *Jehovah*. Happy art thou, O *Israel*, who is like unto thee? Who can count the Priviledges wherewith Chriſt hath inveſted his Churches? O let it never ſeem a light thing in our Eyes, that we grow within his bleſſed incloſure. How ſweet a Promiſe is that, *Exod.* 19. 5. *Ye ſhall be to me a peculiar treaſure, above all People; for all the Earth is mine.*

The Second Corollary.

Hence it follows, That Spiritual Barrenneſs is a great reproach and ſhame to Chriſtians. Shall God's Husbandry, which is ſo planted, watered, fenced, filled with favours and mercies, be like the barren Heath in the Deſert? Surely it ſhould be ſaid of every Soul that grows here, as the *Hiſtorian* ſaith of *Spain*, that there is *nihil infructuoſum, nihil ſterile*; nothing barren or unfruitful in it. God's Vineyard is planted in a very fruitful Hill, *Iſa.* 5. 1. *And ſurely they that are planted in the Houſe of the Lord, ſhould flouriſh in the Court of our God; they ſhould bring forth fruit, even in old age, to ſhew that God is upright*, Pſal. 92. 13, 14. *They are created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God hath ordained they ſhould walk in*, Eph. 2. 10. *They are married unto Chriſt, that they might bring forth fruit to God*, Rom. 7. 4. An empty Branch is a diſhonour to the Root that bears it, a barren Field to the Husbandman that owns it; God cannot endure that in his Fields, which he ſuffers in the Wilderneſs.

The Third Corollary.

If the Church be God's Husbandry, then there is ſuch a ſpecial gracious preſence of the Lord in his

his Churches, as is not to be found in all the World beſide. Where may you expect to find the Husbandman, but in his own Fields? There lyes his buſineſs, and there he delights to be. And where may we expect to find God, but in the Aſſemblies of his Saints? *He walks among the golden Candleſticks*, Rev. 2. 1. I will walk among you (ſaith he) and be your God, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. Upon this account the Church is called *Jehovah Shammah*, the Lord is there, *Ezek.* 48. *ult.* You may ſee the *footſteps* of God in the *Creatures*; but the *face* of God is only to be ſeen in his *Ordinances*. Hence *Pſalm* 27. 4. David *long'd for the Temple, that he might ſee the beauty of the Lord.* Now what is beauty, but a ſymetry and proportion of Parts? In the work of *Creation*, you ſee one Attribute manifeſted in one thing, and another, in another thing; but in the *Sanctuary* you may ſee beauty, even all the Attributes of God diſplayed there: And indeed, we find in Scripture ſuch aſtoniſhing expreſſions about the Viſions of God in his *Church*, that in reading them, a Man can ſee little difference betwixt it and Heaven; for as the Church is called Heaven, *Mat.* 25. 1. ſo its deſcription is like that of Heaven, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23. *You are come to the heavenly* Jeruſalem, *and to an innumerable company of Angels*, &c. And *Rev.* 4. 22. *They ſhall ſee his face, and his name ſhall be written in their foreheads.* And *v.* 24. *The ſaints are repreſented, ſtanding nearer to the throne of God, than the Angels themſelves.* Hence alſo *Ordinances* are called *Galleries*, in which both Saints and Angels walk, beholding the glory of him that ſits upon the Throne, *Zech.* 3. 7. *If you*

will

will keep my ways, I will give you galleries to walk in, among them that ſtand by.

The Fourth Corollary.

If the Church be God's Husbandry, then thoſe that be imployed in Miniſterial Work ought to be Men of great Judgment and Experience in Soul Affairs; for theſe are the Labourers whom God, the Myſtical Husbandman imploys and entruſts about his Spiritual Husbandry. Should a Husbandman imploy ignorant Perſons, that neither underſtand the Rules, nor proper Seaſons of Husbandry; how much would ſuch Workmen damnifie and prejudice him? He will not imploy ſuch to weed his Fields, as know not Wheat from Tares; or to prune his Trees, that think *Midſummer* as fit for that work as *December*; much leſs will God. He qualifies all that he ſends, with Wiſdom for their Work. *His workmen approve themſelves workmen indeed, ſuch as need not be aſhamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*, 2 Tim. 2. 15. As *Bezaleel* was furniſhed with wiſdom, before he was imployed in Tabernacle-work, ſo Chriſt inſtructs his Servants, with skill and inſight, before they are imployed in Miniſterial-work. He gives them a Mouth and Wiſdom, *Luke* 21. 15. indues them with Power from on high: As Chriſt was filled abundantly with the Spirit for his Work, ſo according to proportion, are thoſe that are ſent by him, *John* 20. 21, 22. *As my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you.* And as for thoſe that run before they are ſent, and underſtand not the Myſteries of the Goſpel, I ſhall ſay no more of them but this; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

The

The Fifth Corollary.

To conclude, If the Church be God's Husbandry, that is, if Husbandry have ſo many reſemblances of God's Works about the Church in it; then how inexcuſable is the *ignorance* of Husbandmen in the things of God, who beſides the Word of the Goſpel, have the teaching of the Creatures; and can hardly turn their hands to any part of their Work, but the Spirit hints one Spiritual uſe or other from it to their Souls? How do the Scriptures abound with Parables, and lively Similitudes taken from Husbandry? From the Field, the Seed, the Plow, the Barn, from threſhing and winnowing; ſimilitudes alſo from planting, graffing, and pruning of *Trees*; and not a few from the ordering of Cattel. So that to what buſineſs ſoever you turn your hands, in any part of your Calling, ſtill God meets you with one Heavenly Inſtruction or other. But alas! How few are able to improve their Civil Imployments to ſuch excellent ends? Theſe things are but briefly hinted in the Scriptures, and thoſe hints ſcattered up and down, that they know not where to find them; and if they could, yet would it be difficult ſo to methodize them, as it is neceſſary they ſhould be, in order to their due improvement, by Meditation.

And therefore I judged it neceſſary to collect and prepare them for their uſe; and in this manner to preſent them to you, as you find them in the following Chapters. Read, conſider, and apply; and the Lord make you good Husbands for your own Souls.

THE

THE FIRST PART OF Husbandry Spiritualized.

CHAP. I.

Upon the Induſtry of the Husbandman.

In the laborious Husbandman you ſee,
What all true Chriſtians are, or ought to be.

OBSERVATION.

THE Imployment of the Husbandman is by all acknowledged to be very laborious; there is a multiplicity of Buſineſs incumbent on him. The end of one work, is but the beginning of another. Every ſeaſon of the Year brings its proper work with it: Sometimes you find him in his *Fields*, dreſſing, plowing, ſowing, harrowing, weeding, or reaping;

ing; and sometimes in his *Barn*, threshing, or winnowing; sometimes in his *Orchard*, planting, graffing, or pruning his Trees; and sometimes among his *Cattel*: So that he hath no time to be idle. And as he hath a multiplicity of business, so every part of it is full of toyl, and spending labour: He eats not the Bread of Idleness, but earns it before he eats it; and as it were, dips it in his own sweat, whereby it becomes the sweeter to him. Though sin brought in the Husbandman's sweat, *Gen.* 3. 19. yet now not to sweat would increase his sin, *Ezek.* 16. 49.

APPLICATION.

BEhold here the Life of a serious Christian, shadowed forth to the Life. As the Life of a Husbandman, so the Life of a Christian is no idle, or easie Life. They that take up Religion for *ostentation*, and not for an *occupation*, and those that place the business of it in notions, and idle speculations, in forms, gestures, and external observances, may think, and call it so: But such as devote themselves unto it, and make Religion their business, will find it no easie Work, to exercise themselves to godliness. Many there are, that affect the reputation and *sweet* of it, who cannot endure the labour, and *sweat* of it. If Men might be indulged to divide their hearts betwixt God and the *World*, or to cull out the cheap and easie duties of it, and neglect the more difficult and costly ones, it were an easie thing to be a Christian: But surely to have respect to all God's Commandments, to live the Life, as well as speak the Language of a Christian;

to

be holy in all manner of Converſation is not ſo ſie. This will be evident, by comparing the Life f a Chriſtian, with the Life of a Husbandman, in eſe five Particulars; wherein it will appear that e work of a Chriſtian is by much the hardeſt Vork of the two.

1. The Husbandman hath much to do, many ings to look after; but the Chriſtian more: If e reſpect the extenſiveneſs of his work, he hath large Field indeed to labour in, *Pſal.* 119. 96. *hy Commandment is exceeding broad*; of a vaſt ex- ent and latitude, comprizing not only a multitude f external *Acts* and *Duties*, and guiding the *Offices* f the outward Man about them, but alſo taking n every thought and motion of the inner Man within its Compaſs.

You find in the *Word*, a world of Work cut out for Chriſtians; there's hearing work, praying work, reading, meditating, and ſelf-examining work; it puts him alſo upon a conſtant watch over ll the corruptions of his heart. Oh, what a world f work hath a Chriſtian about them? For of them e may ſay as the *Hiſtorian* doth of *Hannibal*, They are never *quiet*, whether conquering, or conquered. How many weak languiſhing Graces hath he to recover, improve, and ſtrengthen? There is a weak Faith, a languiſhing Love, dull and faint Deſires o be quickened and invigorated. And when all his is done, what a multitude of work do his ſe- veral Relations exact from him? He hath a world f buſineſs incumbent on him as a Parent, Child, Husband, Wife, Maſter, Servant, or Friend, yea, not only to Friends, but Enemies. And beſide all this,

this, how many difficult things are there to be born and ſuffered for Chriſt? And yet will not God allow his People in the neglect of any one of them: Neither can he be a Chriſtian that hath not reſpect to every command, and is not holy in all manner of Converſation, *Pſal.* 119. 6. 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. every one of theſe Duties, like the ſeveral Spokes in a Wheel, come to bear in the whole round of a Chriſtian's Converſation: So that he hath more work upon his hands than the Husbandman.

2. The Husbandman's work is confeſſed to be ſpending work, but not like the Chriſtian's. What *Auguſtus* ſaid of the young *Roman*, is verified in the true Chriſtian, *Quicquid vult, valde vult.* Whatſoever he doth in Religion, he doth to purpoſe. Under the Law, God rejected the *Snail* and the *Aſs*, *Levit.* 11. 30. *Exod.* 13. 13. And under the Goſpel, he allows no ſluggiſh lazy Profeſſor, 1 *Tim* 5. 11, 13. Sleepy Duties are utterly unſuitable to the Living God; he will have the very Spirits diſtilled and offered up to him in every Duty, *John* 4. 24. he beſtows upon his People, the very ſubſtance and kernel of Mercies, and will not accept from them the ſhells and ſhadows of Duties: not the skin, but the inwards, and the fat that covereth the inwards, was required under the Law, *Exod.* 29. 30. And every Sacrifice under the Goſpel, muſt be *ſacrificium medullatum* a Sacrifice full of Marrow; obſerve the manner in which their work is to be performed.

Rom. 12. 11. In ſerving God, fervent in Spirit, or hiſſing hot.

2 *Pet*

2 *Pet.* 1. 10. In securing Salvation, diligent or doing it throughly, and enough.

1 *Tim.* 4. 7. In godliness, exercising or stripping themselves as for a Race.

Luke 13. 24. In the pursuit of happiness, striving even to an Agony.

Acts 26. 7. In Prayer, serving God instantly; or in a stretched-out manner; yea, pouring out theirs hearts before him, *Psal.* 62. 8. as if the Body were left like a dead Corps upon the knees, whilst the Spirit is departed from it, and ascended to God. This is the manner of his work: Judge then how much harder this work is than to spend the sweat of the Brow in manual labour.

3. The Husbandman finds his work as he left it, he can begin one day where he left the other; but it is not so with the Christian, a bad heart and a busie Devil, disorder and spoil his work every day. The Christian finds not his heart in the morning, as he left it at night; and even when he is about his work, how many set-backs doth he meet with: Satan stand at his right hand (the working hand) to resist him, *Zech.* 3. 1. when he would do good, evil (the evil of his own heart and nature) is present with him.

4 The Husbandman hath some resting days; when he throws aside all his work, and takes his recreation; but the Christian hath no resting day, till his dying day; and then he shall rest from his labours. Religion allows no idle day, *but requires him to be always abounding in the work of the Lord*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. When one Duty is done, another calls for him; the Lord's day is a day of rest to the

Husbandman, but no day in the Week ſo laborious to the Chriſtian. O 'tis a ſpending day to him. When he hath gathered in the Crop of one Duty, he is not to ſit down ſatisfied therewith or ſay as that rich worldling did, *Luke* 12. 19. *Soul take thine eaſe, thou haſt goods laid up for many years*; but muſt to plow again, and count it well if the Vintage reach to the Seed-time, *Levit.* 26. 5. I mean, if the ſtrength, influence, and comfort of one Duty, hold out to another Duty; and that it may be ſo, and there be no room left for idleneſs, God hath appointed Ejaculatory Prayer, to fill up the intervals, betwixt ſtated and the more ſolemn Duties. Theſe are to keep in the Fire, which kindled the morning Sacrifice, to kindle the evening Sacrifice. When can the Chriſtian ſit down and ſay, *Now all my work is ended, I have nothing to do without doors, or within?*

Laſtly, There is a time when the labour of the Husbandman is ended; old Age and weakneſs takes him off from all Imployments; they can only look upon their Labourers, but cannot do a ſtroke of work themſelves; they can tell you what they did in their younger years, but now (ſay they) we muſt leave it to younger people: We cannot be young always; but the Chriſtian is never ſuper-annuated as to the work of Religion; yea, the longer he lives, the more his Maſter expects from him. When he is full of days, God expects he ſhould be full of fruits, *Pſalm* 92. 14. *They ſhall bring forth fruits in old age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.*

REFLECTI-

REFLECTIONS.

The Worldling's Reflection.

1. How hard have I laboured for the Meat that perisheth? Prevented the dawning of the day, and laboured as in the very Fire, and yet is the Christian's work harder than mine? Surely then, I never yet understood the work of Christianity. Alas, my sleepy Prayers, and formal Duties, even all that ever I performed in my Life, never cost me that pains, that one hour at Plow hath done. I have either wholly neglected, or at best so lazily performed Religious Duties, that I may truly say, I offer to God what cost me nothing. Wo is me poor wretch! How is the Judgment of *Corah* spiritually executed upon me? The Earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up his Body; but it hath opened its mouth and swallowed up my *heart*, my time, and all my affections. How far am I from the Kingdom of God!

The Formalist's Reflection.

2. And how little better is my case, who have indeed professed Religion, but never made it my business? Will an empty (though splendid) profession save me? How many brave Ships have perished in the Storms, notwithstanding their fine Names, the *Prosperous*, the *Success*, the *Happy Return?* A fine Name could not protect them from the Rocks, nor will it save me from Hell. I have done by Religion, as I should have done by the World; prayed, as if I prayed not; and heard, as if I heard not. I have given to God but the

ſhadow of Duty, and can never expect from him a real Reward.

The Reflection of a ſlothful Chriſtian.

3. How unlike a Chriſtian doſt thou alſo (O my Soul) go about thy work; though upright in the main, yet how little Zeal and Activity doſt thou expreſs in thy Duties? Awake Love and Zeal, ſeeſt thou not the toyl and pains Men take for the world? How do they prevent the dawning of the day? And labour as in the very Fire till night; and all this for a trifle! Should not every drop of Sweat which I ſee trickle from their Brows, fetch (as it were) a drop of Blood from my heart? Who am thus convinced and reproved of ſhameful lazineſs, by their indefatigable diligence. Do they pant after the duſt of the Earth? *Amos* 2. 7. And ſhall not I pant after God? *Pſal.* 42. 1. Ah, my Soul! it was not wont to be ſo with thee, in the days of my firſt Profeſſion. Should I have had no more Communion with God in Duties then, it would have broken my heart: I ſhould have been weary of my Life. Is this a time for one to ſtand idle, who ſtands at the door of Eternity? What, now ſlack-handed, when ſo near to my Everlaſting Reſt! *Rom.* 13. 11. or haſt thou found the work of *God* ſo unpleaſant to thee? *Prov.* 3. 17. Or the Trade of Godlineſs ſo unprofitable? *Pſal.* 19. 11. Or knoweſt thou not, that Millions now in Hell periſhed for want of ſerious diligence in Religion, *Luke* 13. 34. Nor doth my diligence for God, anſwer to that which *Chriſt* hath done and ſuffered, to purchaſe my Happineſs: Or to the Preparations he hath made in Heaven for me?

Or

Or doſt thou forget that thy Maſters Eye is always upon thee, whilſt thou art lazing and loytering? Or would the Damned live at this rate as I do if their day of Grace might be recalled? For ſhame (my Soul) for ſhame! Rouze up thy ſelf, and fall to thy work, with a diligence anſwerable to the weight thereof; for it is no vain work concerning thee, it is thy Life.

The POEM.

Religion When *advanc'd in Power*,
Will make you Husband *every hour.*
'Twill make Men *ſtrive with all their might*,
And therein Find *a ſweet delight.*
If there were Nought *beſides that pay*
Chriſt gives To *chear us in our way*;
Should we not Do *the beſt we can?*
For there's No *ſuch reward from man.*
Shall others Work, *and not regard*
Their ſtrength, To *get a ſmall reward*,
Whilſt we Turn *ſlugs, and loyter thus?*
Oh that Their *Zeal might quicken us!*
Why are our Hands, *and Feet ſo ſlow*,
When we Unto *our buſineſs go?*
How can we Then *Chriſt's pay expect*,
And yet the Chriſtian's *work reject?*
If this, then Alſo *that; embrace*
Them both: If *not, we both diſgrace.*
Some if They *could theſe two divide*,
'Twould Pleaſe *them well, with Chriſt to ſide.*
But if they May *not, then it were*
As good Ceaſe *pleading, they'll not hear.*

Rouze up From *ſloth, (my Soul) betake*
Thee to thy Work, *no cavils make.*
O ſtrive, And *try! Saints ſay that even*
The pain they Take, *hath much of Heaven.*
But yet Their *beſt Wine's kept till laſt,*
Their reſt and Eaſe *comes all ſo faſt.*

CHAP. II.

Upon the Thriftineſs of the Husbandman.

The hardeſt Labourers are the thriving Men,
If you'll have thriving Souls, be active then.

OBSERVATION.

INduſtry and Diligence is the way to thrive and grow Rich in the World. The Earth muſt be manured, or its increaſe is in vain expected; *Qui fugit molam, fugit farinam*; he that refuſes the Mill, refuſes the Meal, (ſaith the Proverb) *The diligent Soul ſhall be made fat.* *Solomon* hath two Proverbs concerning thriftineſs and increaſe in the world. In *Prov.* 10. 4. he ſaith, *The hand of the diligent maketh rich.* And *ver.* 22. he ſaith, *The bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich.* Theſe are not *contradictory*, but *confirmatory* each of other; one ſpeaks of the *principal*, the other of the *inſtrumental* cauſe. Diligence without God's bleſſing will not do it; and that bleſſing cannot be expected without diligence;

gence; therefore Husbandmen ply their buſineſs with unwearied pains, they do even lodge in the midſt of their labours as that good Husband *Boaz* did, *Ruth* 2. 3. They are *parſimonious* of their time, but *prodigal* of their ſweat and ſtrength, becauſe they find this to be the thriving way.

APPLICATION.

AS Nature opens her Treaſures to none but the diligent, ſo neither doth Grace. He that will be *rich*, muſt be a *painful* Chriſtian; and whoſoever will cloſely ply the Trade of *Godlineſs*, ſhall comfortably and quickly find, *That in keeping God's commands there is great reward*, Pſal. 19. 11. God is a *bountiful rewarder of ſuch as diligently ſeek him*, *Heb.* 11. 6. They muſt not indeed work for wages, nor yet will God ſuffer their work to go unrewarded; yea, it ſufficiently rewards it ſelf, 1 *Tim.* 6. 6. And its reward is twofold; (1.) Preſent, and in Part; (2.) Future, and in full, *Mark* 10. 29, 30 Now in this time an hundredfold, even from ſuffering, which ſeems the moſt unprofitable part of the work, and in the world to come Life everlaſting. If you ask what preſent advantage Chriſtians have by their diligence? I anſwer, as much and more than the Husbandman hath from all his toyls and labours. Let us compare the particulars, and ſee what the Husbandman gets, that the Chriſtian gets not alſo Compare your gains, and you'll quickly ſee the odds.

Non mercenarii ſed operarii.

1. You get Credit and Reputation by your diligence; 'tis a commendation and honour to you to

be active and ſtirring men: But how much more honour doth *God* put upon his laborious Servants? 'Tis the higheſt honour of a Creature to be active and uſeful for its God. Saints are called *veſſels of honour*, as they are fitted for the Maſter's uſe, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. Wherein conſiſts the honour of Angels but in this, that they are miniſtring Spirits, ſerviceable Creatures? And all the *Apoſtles* gloried in the Title of Servants. The loweſt office in which a Man can ſerve God, even to that of a *Nethinim*, or Door-keeper, which was the loweſt Order or Rank of Officers in the Houſe of God, *Ezek.* 44. 10, 11. is yet preferred by *David* before the ſervice of the greateſt Prince on Earth, *Pſal.* 84. 10. 'Tis no ſmall honour to be active for God.

2 You have this benefit by your labour, that thereby you avoid looſe and evil Company, which would draw you into miſchief. By diligence for God, the Chriſtian alſo is ſecured from Temptations; *God is with them, while they are with him*, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. Communion with God in the way of Duty is a great Preſervative againſt Temptations. The *School-men* put the queſtion, how the *Angels* and glorified Saints become impeccant? And reſolve it thus: That they are ſecured from ſin, by the Beatifical Viſion; and ſure I am that the Viſions of God, not only in Glory, but now alſo in Duty, are marvellous defences againſt ſin; and they that are moſt active for God, have the fulleſt and cleareſt Viſions of God, *John* 14. 21

3. You have this benefit by your labour, that it tends much to the health of your Bodies. The Chriſtian hath this benefit by his labour, that it tends

tends to a healthful state of Soul; *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright*, *Prov.* 10. 29. As those that follow their daily labours in the Field, have much more health than Citizens that live idlely, or Scholars that live a sedentary Life. So the Active Christian enjoys more spiritual Health, and is troubled with fewer Complaints than others.

4. By diligence in your Civil Imployments, you preserve your Estates, and are kept from running behind-hand in the world. *Bayliffs* trouble not such Mens doors; they usually have the fore-foot of their neighbours. And by activity and diligence for God, Souls are kept from backsliding, and running back in their Graces and Comforts. Remissions and Intermissions in our Duties are the first steps and degrees by which a Soul declines and wastes as to his Spiritual Estate.

5. Your pains and diligence in the Fields makes your Beds sweet to you at night, *Eccles.* 5. 12. *Rest is sweet to a labouring man, whether he eat little or much.* But the diligent Life of a Christian makes the clods of the valley, his Grave sweet to him, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. 2 *Kings* 20. 3. *Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee*, &c. Think Christian, how sweet it will be for thee, when thou comest to die; to say then as thy Redeemer did, when near his death, *John* 17. 4. 5, *I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorifie me with thine own self.*

6. The expence of your Sweat fills your Purses, you get Estates by your diligence and labour; but what are your gains to the gains of Christians? They can get in an hour, that which they will not

part with for all the Gold and Silver on Earth. *Prov.* 3. 14.

So that compare these Labourers, as to all their advantages, and you shall see that there is no Trade like that which the diligent Christian drives.

REFLECTIONS.

Reflections of the slothful Soul.

First, Blush then, O my Soul, at the consideration of thy laziness and sloth which is attended with so many Spiritual wants! And can I wonder at it, when I refuse the painful way of Duty, in which the precious fruits of godliness are only to be found? If these fruits lay upon the surface of Duty, or could be had with wishes, I should not want them; but to dig deep and take pains I cannot. My desires, like those of the slothful Man, kill me, because my hands refuse to labour, *Prov.* 21. 25. If every duty were to be rewarded presently with Gold, would I not have been more assiduous in them, than I have been? And yet I know that a heart full of the Grace and Comfort of the Holy Ghost, is better than a House full of Gold and Silver. O what a composition of stupidity and sloth am I! I have been all for the short cut to Comfort, when constant experience teacheth, that the farther way about, by painful Duty, is the nearest way to it. What pains do Husbandmen take? What perils do Seamen run for a little gain? O sluggish heart! Wilt thou do nothing for Eternal Treasures?

Secondly,

Secondly, If there be such great reward attending diligence in Duty, then why art thou so apt (O my Soul) to cast off Duty, because thou findest not present Comfort in it? How quickly am I discouraged, if I presently find not what I expect in Duty? Whereas, the Well is deep, and much pains must be taken to draw up those Waters of Joy, *Isa.* 12. 3. There is a golden Vein in the Mount of Duty, but it lyes deep; and because I meet not with it as soon as I expect, my lazy Heart throws by the *Shovel*, and cries, dig I cannot.

The Worldling's Reflection.

Thirdly, If this be indeed the rich and thriving Trade, why do I peddle about the poor low things of the World so much, neglecting the rich Trade of Godliness for it? O, how much of my time and strength have these things devoured? Had I employed that time in Communion with God, would it not have turn'd to a better account? Think'st thou in earnest, O my Soul, that God hath endowed thee with such excellent Faculties, capable of the most Divine and Heavenly Employments, or that Jesus Christ hath shed his invaluable precious Blood, or that he hath sent forth the glorious Spirit of Holiness, and all this to fit Men for no higher or nobler Employments than these?

Is this the end of thy wonderful Creation? Doth God whirl about the Heavens in endless revolutions, to beget time for this? Or doth he not rather expect that the weightiest work should engross thy greatest strength, and choicest hours? O, that I could once consider, what a good Master Christi-

ans

ans ſerve, who will not only abundantly reward them at night, but brings them their Food into the Field to incourage them in their labour! What pity is it, that ſo good a Maſter ſhould be ſo badly ſerved as he hath been by me! Hark how he pleads to gain my Heart.

The *POEM*, by way of Dialogue betwixt Chriſt and the World.

CHRIST.

O Why ſo free of ſweat and time,
For what ere long will not be thine?
Or if it might, thou ſell'ſt to loſs,
A precious Soul, for laſting droſs.
Thoſe weary hands, and toyling brains,
Might be imploy'd for better gains.
Wouldſt thou but work as hard for me,
As for the World, which cozens thee;
Thy gains ſhould be a thouſand fold:
For my Revenue's more than gold.

WORLD.

Soul, I have always found thee willing,
Rather by me to earn a ſhilling;
Than truſt uncertain things which lye,
Beyond thee in Eternity.
Shall things unſeen now tempt thee? Tuſh,
A Bird in hand's worth two i'th' Buſh.
I pay thy wages down in hand,
This thou canſt feel, taſte, underſtand.

O let not such a vain pretence,
Prevail against thy very sence.

CHRIST.

Thus beasts are led, thus birds are snar'd,
Thus souls for ruin are prepar'd.
What? Trust no further than you see,
You'll trust a thief as far as me.
Deluded wretch, will nought but sight,
And sence convince thee? O how right,
How just is God? Whose direful scourge
Such Arguments in Hell shall urge.

WORLD.

Christ threatens wrath to come, but I
Do threaten thee with Poverty.
And why wilt thou thy self, and those
That are so dear, to wants expose?
Come, see the Saints; for all their brags
How well they thrive, they'r cloath'd with rags.

CHRIST.

If my dear Saints in rags do go,
'Tis not Religion cloaths them so;
But by such wants the Lord prepares
Their Souls, against thy killing snares.
They all are Heirs, though under age,
Expectants of their heritage.
Kept short for present, yet contemn
A change with those that scoff at them.

WORLD.

It is in vain to plead, for I
With present things charm powerfully.

What

What ere thou offer'ſt they'll deſpiſe;
I hold them Priſoners by their Eyes.

CHRIST.

If they will ſerve no other Lord,
Then let it ſtand upon record
Againſt their Souls, that they refus'd
My wages, and my grace abus'd.

ANOTHER.

NOne will deny but thoſe are bleſſed pains,
Which are attended with the richeſt gains.
Grant this, and then moſt clearly 'tis inferr'd,
Soul work to all deſerves to be preferr'd.
This is an unknown Trade, Oh, who can count,
To what the gains of godlineſs amount?
For one poor ſhilling, O, what risks ſome run?
Some toyling as i'th' fire, from Sun to Sun;
Whereas one hour ſpent with God brings in
Such heavenly treaſures, that poor Souls have been
Inrich'd for ever. Even as you ſee
A Prince's Favourite upon the Knee,
Can in an hour's time more wealth obtain,
Than all your lives by labour you can gain.
Prayer-gains are great, and quick returns are made;
Sure then the Chriſtian drives the richeſt Trade.
'Tis true, the Hypocrite that never drove
A ſerious trade for Heaven, may Bankrupt prove;
But holy Souls, which mind, and cloſely ply
Their buſineſs, greatly are inrich'd thereby.
The difference 'twixt the one, and t'other's beſt
By ſuch a Simile as this expreſt.

As in a Summers-day you often ſee,
The wanton Butterfly and painful Bee,
On Flagrant Flowers fix, whence one doth ſtrive
To bear his precious burden to the Hive:
The other's pains no profit with it brings,
His time is ſpent in painting of his wings.
When Winter comes the Bee hath full ſupplies,
The other creeps into an hole and dies.
Like different events ſhall be betwixt
The painful Saint, and lazy Notioniſt.

CHAP. III.

Upon the Chearfulneſs of the Husbandman.

The Plowman ſings and whiſtles though he ſweat,
Shall Chriſtians droop becauſe their work is great?

OBSERVATION.

THough the Labours of Husbandmen are very great and toylſom, yet with what chearfulneſs do they go through them? It is very delightful to hear the melody they make by whiſtling, as they follow the Plow; yea, the very Horſes have their Bells, which make a pleaſant noiſe. *Horſes* (ſaith Mr. *Fuller*) *will do more for a whiſtle, than a whip*; and their Bells do, as it were, gingle away their wearineſs. I have been often delighted with this Country-Muſick, whereby they ſweeten their hard labours with an innocent Pleaſure, and verifie the ſaying of the *Poet*;

Tempus in agrorum cultu conſumere dulce eſt. Ovid.

Although they Plow from morning until night,
Time ſteals away with pleaſure and delight.

APPLI-

APPLICATION.

BUT how much greater cauſe have the People of God to addreſs themſelves unto his work with all chearfulneſs of Spirit? And indeed ſo far as the heart is ſpiritual, it delights in its Duties. 'Tis true, the work of a Chriſtian is painful, and much more ſpending, than the Husbandman's (as was opened *Chap.* 1.) but then it as much exceeds in the delights and pleaſures that attend it. What is the Chriſtian's work, but *with joy to draw water out of the wells of ſalvation? Iſa.* 12. 3. You may ſee what a pleaſant path the path of Duty is, by the chearfulneſs of thoſe that have walked in them, *Pſal* 119. 14. *I have rejoiced in the way of thy judgments, as much as in all riches.* And by the Promiſes that are made to ſuch, *Pſal.* 138. 5. *Yea, they ſhall ſing in the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord.* And again, *You ſhall have a ſong as in the night, when an holy ſolemnity is kept, and gladneſs of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe, to come to the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty one of* Iſrael, *Iſa.* 30. 29.

And laſtly, By the many commands, whereby joy in the way of the Lord is made the Duty of the Saints. *Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous, for praiſe is comely for the upright, Pſal.* 97. 12. *Rejoice, and again I ſay rejoice,* Philip. 4. 4. Where the command is doubled; yea, not only ſimple rejoiceing, but the higheſt degree of that Duty come within the command, *Pſal.* 132. 2. 16. *Shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.* And *Luke* 6. 22, 23. they are bid *to leap for joy*, when about the difficult'ſt part of their work. And that you may

ſee

see there is sufficient ground for it, and that it is not like the mad mirth of sinners, be pleased to consider,

1. The nature of the work about which they are imployed; it is the most excellent and heavenly Imployment that ever Souls were acquainted with O what a ravishing and delightsome thing it is to walk with God! And yet by this, the whole work of a Christian is expressed, *Gen.* 17. 1. Can any Life compare with this for pleasure? Can they be chill that walk in the Sun-shine? Or sad, that abide in the Fountain of all delights? And walk with him whose Name is the God of all comfort, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *In whose presence is the fulness of joy*, *Psal.* 16. 11. O what an Angelical Life doth a Christian then live?

Or (2*ly.*) If we consider the vareity of Spiritual Employments, *varietas delectat*. Change of Employment takes off the tediousness of labour. Variety of voices please the Ear; variety of Colours delight the Eye; the same meat prepared several ways pleases the Palate more, and clogs it less. But O the variety of choice Dishes wherewith God entertains his People in a Sabbath! As the Word, Prayer, Sacraments, *&c*, *Isa.* 58. 13. If thou call the Sabbath thy delights; or, as *Tremelius* renders it, thy delicate things. *My soul* (saith *David*) *shall be satisfied, as with marrow and fatness*, Psal. 63. 5.

3. Or lastly, If we consider the suitableness of this work to a regenerate Soul. Is it any pain for a Bird to fly? Or a Fish to swim? Is the Eye tyred with beautiful Objects; Or the Ear with melodious sounds

sounds? As little can a Spiritual Soul be wearied with Spiritual and Heavenly exercises, *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inner man. Gravia non gravitant in eorum loco* (saith the *Philosopher*) weighty things are not heavy in their own Element or Center. And surely, God is the Center of all gracious Spirits. A Saint can sit from morning to night to hear *discourses* of the love and loveliness of Jesus Christ. The sight of your thriving Flocks, and flourishing Fields, cannot yield you that pleasure which an upright Soul can find in one quarter of an hour's Communion with God. *They that are after the flesh* (saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 8. 5.) *do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.* But then, look how much Heavenly Objects transcend earthly ones, and how much the *Soul* is more capable of delight in those Objects, than the gross and duller Sences are in theirs; so much doth the Pleasure arising from the Duty, excel all sensitive delights on Earth.

REFLECTIONS.

The Carnal Heart's Reflection.

How am I cast and condemned by this, may I say, who never favoured this spiritual delight in holy Duties. When I am about my Earthly Employments, I can go on unweariedly from day to day; all the way is down-hill to my Nature; and the wheels of my Affections being oiled with carnal delight, runs so fast, that they have need most times of trigging. Here I rather need the *Curb* than the Spur. O, how fleet and nimble are my Spirits in these their pursuits! But O, what a slug am

m I in Religious Duties! Sure if my Heart were renewed by Grace, I should delight in the Law of God, *Rom.* 7. 22. All the World is alive in their ways, every Creature enjoys his proper Pleasure; and is there no delight to be found in the paths of Holiness? Is Godliness only a dry Root that bears no pleasant Fruits? No, no, there are doubtless incomparable Pleasures to be found therein; but such a carnal Heart as mine savours them not.

The Hypocrite's Reflection.

I cannot say, but I have found delight in Religious Duties, but they have been only such as rather sprang from the ostentation of Gifts and Applauses of Men, than any sweet and real Communion I have had with God through them; they have rather proved Food and Fuel to my Pride, than Food to my Soul. Like the Nightingale I can sing sweetly, when I observe others to listen to me, and be affected with my musick. O, false deceitful Heart, such delight as this will end in howling! Were my Spirit right, it would as much delight in Retirements for the injoyment of God, as it doth in those Duties that are most exposed to the observation of Man. Will such a spring as this maintain a stream of Affections when carnal motives fail? What wilt thou answer (O my Soul) to that question, *Job* 29. 9, 10. *Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?* What wilt thou reply to this question? Deceive not thou thy self, O my Soul! Thou wilt doubtless be easily perswaded to let go that thou never delightest in; and from an *Hypocrite* in Religion quickly become an *Apostate* from Religion.

From

The upright Heart's Reflection.

From all this, the *upright Heart* takes *advantage* to rouze up its *delight* in *God*; and thus it expostulateth with it self: Doth the *Plowman* sing amidst his drudging labours, and whistle away his wearinesse in the Fields, and shall I droop a midst such Heavenly Employment? O my Soul, what want'st thou here, to provoke thy delight? If there be such an Affection as delight in thee, methinks, such an object as the blessed Face of God in Ordinances should excite it. Ah how would this ennoble all my Services, and make them Angel like! How glad are those blessed Creatures to be imployed for God? No sooner were they created but they sang together, and shouted for joy, *Job* 38. 7. How did they fill the Air with heavenly melody, when sent to bring the joyful Tydings of a Saviour to the World, Ascribing glory to God in the highest of their Powers? Yea, this delight would make all my Duties Christ-like; and the nearer that pattern, the more excellent. He delighted to do his Fathers will, it was to him meat and drink, *Psal.* 40. 7. *John* 4. 32, 34.

Yea, it would not only ennoble, but facilitate all my Duties, and be to me as wings to a Bird in flying, or Sails to a Ship in motion. *Non tardat uncta rota*; oyled Wheels run freely: *Or ever I was aware, my Soul made me like the Chariots of* Aminadab. O! what is the reason (my God) my delight in thee should be so little? Is it not, because my unbelief is so great? Rouze up my delights, O thou Fountain of Pleasure! And let me swim down the

he ſtream of Holy Joys in Duty, into the bound-eſs Ocean of thoſe immenſe Delights that are in hy preſence, and at thy Right Hand for ever-more.

The POEM.

O What a dull, deſpondent Heart is mine,
That takes no more delight in things Divine?
When all the Creatures both in Heaven and Earth,
Enjoy their pleaſures, and are big with mirth.
Angels and Saints that are before the Throne,
In extaſies and raptures every one
Perpetually is held; each bleſſed Spirit
The pureſt higheſt joys doth there inherit.
The Saints on Earth in their imperfect ſtate;
Thoſe Peerleſs Joys by Faith do antedate.
To natural men, who ſavour not this pleaſure
Yea bounteous nature doth unlock her treaſure
Of ſenſitive delights. Yea, ſtrange to tell;
Bold ſinners rant it all the way to Hell.
Like Fiſh that play in Jordan's *Silver ſtream,*
So theſe in ſenſual Luſts; and never dream
Of that dead Sea, to which the ſtream doth tend,
And to their Pleaſures puts a fatal end.
Yea Birds and Beaſts, as well as Men, enjoy
Their innocent delights. Theſe chirp and play;
The cheerful Birds among the Branches ſing,
And make the neighbouring Groves with Muſick ring,
With various warbling notes they all invite,
Our raviſht Ears, with pleaſure and delight.
The new faln Lambs will in a Sun-ſhine day,
About their feeding Dams jump up and play.

Are

Are Cisterns sweet? And is the Fountain bitter?
Or can the Sun be dark when Glow-worms glitter?
Have Instruments their sweet melodious Airs?
All Creatures their delights, and Saints not theirs?
Yea, theirs transcend these sensual ones as far,
As noon-day Phebus *doth a twinkling Star.*
Why droop I then, may any Creature have
A Life like mine for Pleasure? Who e're gave
The like incouragement that Christ hath given,
To do his will on earth as 'tis in heaven?

CHAP. IV.

Upon the due quality of Arable Land.

Corn-Land must neither be too fat, nor poor;
The middle state suits best with Christians sure.

OBSERVATION.

HUsbandmen find by experience, that their Arable Lands may be dreſt too much as well as too little. If the Soil be over-rank, the Seed ſhoots up ſo much into the ſtalk, that it ſeldom ears well; and if too thin and poor, it wants its due Nutriment, and comes not to Perfection. Therefore their care is to keep it in Heart, but not to over-dreſs or under-dreſs it. The end of all their coſt and pains about it is Fruit; and therefore reaſon tells them, that ſuch a ſtate and temperament of it, as beſt fits it for Fruit, is beſt both for it and them.

APPLI-

APPLICATION.

AND doth not Spiritual Experience teach Chriſtians, that a mediocrity and compe-ncy of the things of this Life, beſt fits them for e fruits of obedience, which is the end and ex-llency of their beings? A man may be over-ercied, as well as over-afflicted, *Rarę fumant fœ-cibus aræ*, the Altars of the Rich ſeldom ſmoke. Vhen our outward Enjoyments are by Provi-ence ſhaped and fitted to our condition, as a Suit s to the Body, that ſits cloſe and neat, neither too urt nor long; we cannot deſire a better conditi-n in this world. This was it that wiſe *Agur* re-ueſted of God, Prov. 30.8,9. *Give me neither Po-verty nor Riches, but feed me with food convenient for me, leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay who is the Lord? Or leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain.* Againſt both he prays *equally*, not *abſolute-ly*; that had been his ſin; but comparatively and ſubmiſſively to the will of God. He had rather, if God ſee it fit, to avoid both of theſe extreams; But what would he have then? Why, Food con-venient. Or according to the *Hebrew*, give me my prey or ſtatute bread; which is a Metaphor from Birds which fly up and down to prey for their young, and what they get they diſtribute among them; they bring them enough to preſerve their lives, but not more than enough to lye mouldering in the neſt. Such a proportion *Agur* deſired; and the reaſon why he deſired it, is drawn from the danger of both the extreams. He meaſured (like a wiſe Chriſtian) the conveniency or inconveniency of his Eſtate in the World, by its ſuitableneſs or unſuitableneſs

unſuitableneſs to the end of his being, which i
the ſervice of God. He accounted the true excel
lency of his Life to conſiſt in its reference and ten
dency to the glory of his God; and he could no
ſee how a *redundancy*, or too great a *penury* o
earthly comforts, could fit him for that; but a
middle *ſtate* equally removed from both extreams
beſt fitted that end. And this was all that good
Jacob who was led by the ſame Spirit, lookt at
Gen. 28. 20. *And Jacob vowed a vow, ſaying, if God
will be with me, and keep me in the way that I go, and
give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, ſo that
I come again to my father's Houſe in peace; then ſhall
the Lord be my God.* Poor *Jacob*, he deſires no great
matters in the World, Food and Raiment will ſa-
tisfie him; in Spiritual things his deſires are
boundleſs, he is the moſt greedy and unſatisfied
Man in the World, *Hoſ.* 12. 4. but in the matters
of this life, if he can get from God but *offam &
aquam*, a morſel of meat, and a mouthful of Wa-
ter, he will not envy the richeſt *Cræſus* or *Craſ-
ſus* upon Earth. *Cibus & potus ſunt divitiæ Chriſti-
anorum. Meat* and *Drink* are the riches of Chriſti-
ans. *Divitiæ ſunt ad legem naturæ compoſita paupe-
tas* (ſaith *Pomponius Atticus*) Riches are ſuch a
Poverty or Mediocrity, as hath enough for nature's
uſes; and ſuch a ſtate is beſt accommodated, both
to the condition and to the deſires of a Saint.

1. To his condition; For what is a Saint but a
Stranger and Pilgrim upon Earth, a Man in a
ſtrange Countrey travelling homeward? So *David*
profeſſed himſelf, Pſal. 119. 19. *I am a ſtranger in
this earth.* And ſo thoſe Worthies, who are now
a

at home in Heaven, *Heb.* 11. 13. they profeſſed themſelves to be Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, and to ſeek a Country; a *viaticum* contents a Traveller, he will not cumber himſelf with ſuperfluous things which would rather clog and tire than expedite and help him in his Journey.

2. It ſuits beſt with his deſires, I mean his regular and adviſed deſires. For,

1. A gracious Soul earneſtly deſires a free condition in the World, he is ſenſible he hath much work to do, a race to run, and is loth to be clog'd, or have his Foot in the Snare of the Cares or Pleaſure of this Life. He knows that fulneſs expoſes to wantonneſs and irreligion, *Deut.* 6. 12. *Hoſ.* 13. 6. 'Tis hard, in the midſt of ſo many tempting objects, to keep the golden Bridle of moderation upon the Affections. The Heart of a Chriſtian, like the *Moon*, commonly ſuffers an Eclipſe when it is at the full, and that by the interpoſition of the Earth.

It was *Solomon*'s fulneſs that drew out and diſſolved his Spirits, and brought him to ſuch a low ebb in Spirituals, that it remains a queſtion with ſome, Whether he ever recovered it to his dying day. As it is the miſery of the poor to be neglected of Men, ſo it is the miſery of the rich to neglect God. Who can be poorer, than to have the World, and love it? Or richer, than to enjoy but little of it, and live above it?

And on the other ſide, extream poverty is no leſs expoſed to ſin and danger, *Levit.* 6. 2, 3, 4. As high and lofty Trees are ſubject to Storms and Tempeſts, ſo the loweſt Shrubs to be brows'd on by every Beaſt; and therefore, a Saint de-

ſires a juſt competency as the *fitteſt*, becauſe the *freeſt* ſtate.

2. A gracious Perſon deſires no more but a competency, becauſe there is moſt of God's love and care diſcovered in giving in our daily Bread, by a daily Providence. It is betwixt ſuch a condition, and a fulneſs of Creature-proviſions in our land, as it was betwixt *Egypt* and *Canaan*; *Egypt* was watered with the foot from the River *Nilus*, and little of God was ſeen in that mercy; but *Canaan* depended upon the dews and ſhowers of Heaven; and ſo every ſhower of *rain* was a *refreſhing* ſhower to their Souls as well as Bodies. Moſt men that have a ſtock of Creature-comforts in their hands look upon all as coming in an ordinary natural courſe, and ſee very little of God in their mercies. Pope *Adrian* built a Colledge at *Louvain*, and cauſed this inſcription to be written in Letters of Gold on the Gates thereof; *Trajectum plantavit, Louvanium rigavit, Cæſar dedit incrementum.* (i.e.) *Utrecht* planted me, *Louvain* water'd me, and *Cæſar* gave the increaſe. One to reprove his folly wrote underneath, *Hic Deus nihil fecit*; Here God did nothing. Carnal men, they ſow, and reap, and eat, and look no farther.

But now, when a man ſees his mercies come in by the ſpecial and aſſiduous care of God for him, there is a double ſweetneſs in thoſe mercies; the natural ſweetneſs which comes from the Creature it ſelf, every one, even the Beaſts, can taſte that as well as thee; but beſides that, there is a Spiritual ſweetneſs, far exceeding the former, which none but a Believer taſtes; and much of that comes from

the

the manner in which he receives it, because it comes (be it never so course or little) as a Covenant-mercy to him. *He hath given bread to them that fear him, he is ever mindful of his Covenant*, Psal. 111. 5. *Luther*, who made many a Meal upon a broiled Herring, was wont to say, *Mendicato pane hic vivamus, an non hoc pulchre sarcitur in eo, quod pascimur pane cum angelis & vita aterna, Christo & Sacramentis?* Let us be content with course fare here, have we not the Bread that came down from Heaven? Do we not feed with Angels? A pregnant instance of the sweetness of such mercies, is given us by a worthy Divine of our own, Mr. *Isaac Ambrose*. 'For mine own part (saith he) however the Lord hath seen cause to give me but a poor pittance of outward things (for which I bless his Name) yet in the income thereof, I have many times observ'd so much of his peculiar Providence, that thereby they have been very much sweetned, and my *Heart* hath been raised to admire his *Grace*. When of late under an hard dispensation (which I judge not meet to mention, wherein I suffered with inward peace conscientiously) all streams of wonted supplies being stopt, the Waters of relief for my self and Family did run low; I went to Bed with some staggerings and doubtings of the *Fountain's* letting out it self for our refreshing; but ere I did awake in the morning, a Letter was brought to my *Bed-side*, which was *signed by* a choice *Friend* Mr. *Anthony Ash*, which reported some unexpected breakings out of God's goodness for my com-

Epistle to the Earl of Bedford ante ultima.

'fort. These are some of his Lines—— Your God, 'who hath given you an *Heart* thankfully to record 'your experiences of his goodness, doth renew 'experiences for your incouragement. Now I shall 'report one which will raise your Spirit towards 'the God of your Mercy, &c. Wherenpon he sweetly concludes, 'One morsel of God's Provi-'sions, (especially if it come unexpected, and upon 'Prayer, when wants are most) will be more 'sweet to a Spiritual relish, than all former full 'Enjoyments were.

Many Mercies come unask'd for, and they require thankfulness; but when Mercies come in upon Prayer, and as a return of Prayer, their sweetness more than doubles; for now it's both God's Blessing upon his own Institution, and a Seal set to his Promise at once, *Psal.* 66. 16, 17. Doubtless *Hannah* found more comfort in her *Samuel*, and *Rachel* in her *Naphtali*, (the one being ask'd of God, and the other wrastled for with God, (as their Names import) than Mothers ordinarily do in their Children.

REFLECTIONS.

The Reflection of the designing Hypocrite.

Do the people of God desire only so much of the Creature as may fit them for the service of God? What a *Wretch* am I that have desired only so much of Religion as may fit me to gain the Creature! As God's People have subjected all their Creature-enjoyments to Religion, so oppositely, O my Soul, thou hast subjected Religion to thy worldly interest and designs. Instead

of

of eating and drinking to ſerve God, I have ſerved God that I might eat and drink; yea, I have not only acted below Religion, but below Reaſon alſo; for reaſon dictates plainly, that the means muſt never be more excellent than the end. Wretch that I am, to make Religion a Slave to my Luſt, a Stirrup to Advancement, an Artifice to carry on my carnal Deſigns: Verily I have my Reward; and this is all the good I am ever like to get by it.

The Worldling's Reflection.

And no leſs ſhould the Worlding tremble, to conſider how he hath caſt off the *Duties* of Religion, made them ſtand aſide, and give place to the world. Inſtead of deſiring ſo much only as might make him ſerviceable to God, he thruſts aſide the ſervice of God to get as much of the *world* as he can, who is ſo far from making *Godlineſs* the end of his Creature-comforts, that he rather looks upon it as an obſtacle and hindrance to them. May not the very Heathens make me bluſh? Could *Ariſtotle* deliver this as a true rule to Proſperity, to make Religion our firſt and chief care? Could *Ariſtippus* ſay, He would rather neglect his Means than his Mind, his Farm than his Soul? Will the very *Mahometans*, how urgent ſoever their *buſineſs* be, lay it aſide, five times in the day to pray? Yea, is it common to a Proverb among the very *Papiſts*, that Maſs and Meat hinders no Man, and yet I that profeſs my ſelf a Chriſtian, thruſt out Duty for every trifle? O wretched Soul! how hath the God of this world blinded mine Eyes? Can the world indeed do that for me, that Chriſt can do? *Hath* it ever prov'd true to 'em that truſted it and

doated on it? Hath it not at last turn'd them off as Men turn off a Sumpter-Horse at night, that hath been a drudge to carry their Gold and Silver for them all day, and at last is turn'd out with an empty Belly, and a galled Back? O how righteous will that sentence of God be? Go cry to the Gods whom thou hast served!

The Gracious Soul's Reflection.

And may not many *gracious hearts* turn in upon themselves with shame and sorrow, to consider how unsatisfied they have been in that condition, that others have preferr'd and esteem'd as the greatest of all outward Mercies? I have indeed been fed with Food convenient, but not contented: How hath my Heart been tortured from day to day with anxious thoughts, what I shall eat and drink, and wherewith I and mine should be cloathed? I pretend indeed that I care but for a competency of the World, but sure I am, my cares about it have been incompetent. Come, my distrustful earthly Heart, let me propound a few Questions to thee about this matter, and answer truly to what I shall demand of thee.

Quest. 1. Hast thou here a continuing City? Art thou at home, or upon thy Journey, that thou art so solicitous about the World? Thy Profession indeed speaks thee a stranger upon Earth, but thy Conversation a home-dweller. *Erasmus* said, he desired Honours and Riches, no more than a weary Horse doth a heavy Cloak-bag. Wouldst thou not account him a Fool that would Victual his Ship as much to cross the *Channel* to *France*, as if she were bound for the *East-Indies*? Alas! it will be but a little

little while, and then there will be no more need of any of these things. 'Tis sad, that a Soul which standst at the door of Eternity, should be perplexing it self about Food and Raiment.

Quest. 2. Which of all the Saints hast thou known to be the better for much of the world? It hath been some Mens utter ruin. Seldom doth God suffer Men to be their own Carvers, but they cut their own Fingers. *To give Riches and Pleasure to an evil man* (saith *Aristotle*) *is but to give Wine to one that hath a Fever.* Where there is no *want*, there is usually much *wantonness* What a sad story was that of *Pius Quintus*; When I was in a low condition (said he) I had some comfortable hopes of my Salvation, but when I came to be a Cardinal, I greatly doubted of it; but since I came to the Popedom, I have no hope at all. Though this poor undone Wretch spake it out and others keep it in, yet doubtless he hath many thousand Fellows in the world that might say as much, would they but speak the truth.

And even God's own people, though the world hath not excluded them out of heaven, yet it hath sorely clog'd them in the way thither. Many that have been very humble, holy and heavenly in a low condition, have suffered a fad ebb in a full condition. What a cold blast have they felt coming from the Cares and Delights of this Life, to chill both their Graces and Comforts! It had been well for some of God's people, if they had never known what Prosperity meant.

Quest. 3. Is not this a sad Symptom of a declining state of Soul, to be so hot, eager, and anxious

about the ſuperfluous trifles of this Life? Think'ſt thou, O my Soul! that one who walks in the views of that Glory above, and maintains a Converſation in Heaven, can be much taken with theſe Vanities? Do not the Viſions of God vail the tempting ſplendor of the Creature? It was the Opinion of ſome of the *School-men*, that the reaſon why *Adam in Paradiſe* was not ſenſible of his nakedneſs, was becauſe he was wholly taken up in converſing with God. But this is certain, lively and ſweet Communion with God, blunts and dulls the edge of the Affections to earthly things; and canſt thou be ſatisfied, my Soul, with ſuch gains as are attended with ſuch Spiritual Loſſes?

Queſt. 4. To conclude, is it not diſhonourable to God, and a juſtification of the way of the world, for me that profeſs my ſelf a Chriſtian to be as eager after Riches as other Men? *After all theſe things do the nations ſeek*, *Mat.* 6. 32. If I had no Father in Heaven, nor Promiſe in the Word, it were another matter; but ſince my heavenly Father knows what I have need of, and hath charged me to be careful in nothing, but only tell him my wants, *Phil.* 4. 6. How unbecoming a thing is it in me to live and act as I have done! Let me henceforth learn to meaſure and eſtimate my condition, rather by its uſefulneſs to God, than its content and eaſe to my Fleſh.

The POEM.

IF fruit and ſervice be indeed the end
To which my Being and Redemption tend,
Reaſon concludes that ſtate of all the reſt,
Which is moſt ſerviceable, to be beſt.

And

And such a state experience shews to lye
'Twixt Fulness, and a pinching Poverty.
This golden Mean *is worth a golden* Mine;
He that hath this should be asham'd to whine.
The full-fed Christian, like the Ox i'th' Stall,
Is no way fit to work or plow withal.
And penury, like Pharaoh's *leaner Kine,*
Devours the fattest Portions of our time.
That Man with whom this earthly Pleasure's found,
Or in whose heart those anxious Cares abound,
And yet can walk by Scripture rule and line,
Will need a better Head and Heart than mine:
A single Staff the Traveller may find
Of use, and service; but if you should bind
A bundle of them to his back, they'll make
Him slack his pace, and cry my Shoulders ake.
I am a Traveller, this World's my way,
A single Staff may be of use to stay
My feeble Body if it do not crack,
By too hard leaning on it; but my Back
Will bear no more: Alas, I soon should tire;
And more than one I cannot well desire.
Lord, to prescribe to thee becomes me not,
I rather do submit unto my Lot;
But yet let condescending Grace admit
The Servant's suit this once, and this is it:
The Staff of Bread convenient let me have,
And manage it discreetly; so 'twill save
Thy feeble Servant from the mire and dirt;
But more or less than this may do me hurt.
Or if thou say, thy Servant shall have none;
Then strengthen Faith, that I may go alone.

CHAP. V.

Upon the Improvement of Bad Ground.

Spent barren Land, you can reſtore and nouriſh,
Decayed Chriſtians, God can cauſe to flouriſh.

OBSERVATION.

WHere Land is ſpent out by Tillage, or for want of Manuring, the careful Husbandman hath many ways to recover and bring it in heart again. He lets it lye fallow to give it reſt, and time to recover it ſelf, carries out his Sand, Lime, and Compoſt, to refreſh and quicken it again, and in Paſture and Meadow-ground, will waſh it (if poſſible) with a current of Water, or the float of the ways after a fall of Rain, which is to the Earth as a Spring of new Blood to a Conſumptive Body. He cuts down and kills the Weeds that ſuck it out, and cauſes them to make reſtitution of what they have purloined from it, by rotting upon the place where they grew. As careful are they to recover it when it is ſpent, as an honeſt Phyſician is of his Patient in a languiſhing Condition; for he knows his Field will be as grateful to him, and fully requite his Care and Coſt.

APPLICATION.

AS Man's, ſo God's Husbandry is ſometimes out of caſe, not by yielding too many *Crops* but too few. The Myſtical Husbandman hath ſome Fields, (I mean particular Societies and Perſons who were once fragrant and fruitful like a Field

which

which God had bleſſed, but are now decayed and grown barren; whoſe gleanings formerly, were more than their Vintage now; the things that are in them are ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 3. 'Tis poſſible, yea, too common for gracious Souls to be reduced to a very low ebb, both of Graces and Comforts; how how I will not ſay: Our *Britiſh Divines* tell us, That Grace indeed cannot be totally intermitted, nor finally loſt; but there may be an omiſſion of the Act, though not an omiſſion of the *Habit:* The Act may be perverted, though the Faith cannot be ſubverted; it may be ſhaken in, though not ſhaken out; its Fruit may fall, but its Sap lyes hid in the Root; they demerit the loſs of the Kingdom, but loſe it not effectively; the effect of Juſtification may be ſuſpended, but the ſtate of the Juſtified cannot be diſſolved.

How far true Grace in a Believer may fail.

Gratia nec totaliter intermittitur, nec finaliter amittitur. Actus omittitur, Habitus non amittitur. Actio pervertitur, fides non ſubvertitur. Concutitur, non excutitur. Defluit fructus, latet ſuccus. Jus ad regnum amittunt demeritorie, non effective, effectus juſtificationis ſuſpenditur, at ſtatus juſtificati non diſſolvitur. Suff Britt.

Certain it is, one that like *Paul* hath been rapt up with joy, even to the third Heavens and cryed, *I am more than a Conquerour, who ſhall ſeperate me from the love of God?* May at another time lye mourning as at the Gates of Death, crying, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* One that hath walked in ſweet *Communion* with *God*, ſunning himſelf in the light

of

of his Countenance, may afterwards *walk in darkneſs, and ſee no light Iſa.* 50. 10. He that hath caſt Anchor within the vail and rode ſecurely in the peaceful harbour of aſſurance, may ſeem to feel his Anchor of Hope come home to him, and go adrift into the ſtormy Ocean again, crying with the Church, *Lam.* 3. 18. *My hope is periſhed from the Lord.* His calm and clear Air may be over-caſt and clouded, yea filled with Storms and Tempeſts, Lightnings and Thunder; his Graces, like under-ground Flowers in the Winter, may all diſappear, and hide their beautiful heads.

To *God* he may ſay, I am caſt out of thy ſight; I know thou canſt do much, but wilt thou ſhew wonders to the dead?

To the *promiſes* he may ſay, you are ſweet things indeed, but what have I to do with you? I could once indeed rejoyce in you as my portion; but now I doubt I graſped a ſhadow, a fancy inſtead of you. To *Saints* he may ſay, turn away from me, labour not to comfort me, O do not ſpill your precious Ointments of Conſolation upon my Head; for what have I to do with Comfort. To former *Experiences* he may ſay in his haſte, you are all Liars. To the *Light of God's Countenance* he may ſay, farewell ſweet Light, I ſhall behold thee no more. To *Satan* he may ſay, O mine Enemy, thou haſt at laſt prevailed againſt me, thou art ſtronger than I, and haſt overcome. To *Duties* and *Ordinances* he may ſay, where is the ſweetneſs I once found in you? You were once ſweeter to me than the Honey-comb; but now as taſteleſs as the white of an Egg. O ſad relapſe! deplored change! *quantum mutatus ab illo!*

But

But will God leave his poor Creatures helpless in such a case as this? Shall their Leaf fall, their Branches wither, their Joy, their Life, their Heart depart? Will he see their Graces fainting, their Hopes gasping, the new Creature panting, the things that are in them ready to die, and will he not regard it? Yes, yes, *There is hope of a Tree if it be cut down, and the root thereof wax old in the earth, yet by the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant*, Job 14. 8, 9. This poor declined Soul, as sad as it sits at the Gates of Hell, may rouze up it self at last, and say to *Satan* that stands triumphing over him, *Rejoyce not over me, O mine Enemy, for though I fall, yet I shall arise; though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me*, *Mic.* 7. 8. He may raise up himself upon his Bed of languishing for all this, and say to *God*, *Though thou hast chastned me sore, yet hast thou not given me over unto death.* He may turn about to the Saints that have mourned for him, and with a lightsome Countenance say, *I shall not die but live, and declare the words of the Lord.* He may say to the *Promises*, you are the true and faithful sayings of God, my unbelief did belye you: I said in my hast you were Liars, but I eat my words, I am ashamed of my folly. Surely, O Soul, there is yet hope in thine end, thou maist be restored, *Psal.* 23. 3. thou maist yet recover thy verdure, and the Dew be as the Dew of Herbs. For,

1. Is he not thy Father, and a Father full of Compassions and Bowels? And can a Father stand by his dying Child, see his fainting Fits, hear his melting groans, and pity-begging looks, and not help

help him especially having Restoratives by him, that can do it? Surely, *As a Father pities his own Children, so will thy God pity thee*, Psal. 103. 12, 13. *He will spare thee, as a Father spareth his own Son that serves him*, Mark 3. 17. Hear, how his Bowels yearn; *I have surely heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himself, is not* Ephraim *my dear Son? is he not a pleasant Child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, I will surely have mercy on him*, Jer. 31. 20

2. Doth he not know thy Life would be altogether useless to him, if he should not restore thee? What service art thou fit to perform to him, in such a condition? *Thy days will consume like smoke, whilst thy heart is smitten and withered like grass*, *Psal.* 102. 3, 4. Thy Months will be Months of Vanity, they will fly away and see no good, *Job* 7. 3. If he will but quicken thee again, then thou must call upon his Name, *Psal.* 80. 18. but in a dead and languishing condition, thou art no more fit for any work of God, than a sick Man is for manual Labours; and surely he hath not put those precious and excellent Graces of his Spirit within thee for nothing; they were planted there for Fruit and Service, and therefore doubtless he will revive thee again.

3. Yea, dost thou not think he sees thine inability to bear such a condition long? He knows *thy Spirit would fail before him, and the Soul which he hath made*, Isa. 57. 16. *David* told him as much, in the like condition, *Psal.* 143. 7, 8. *Hear me speedily, O Lord, for my Spirit faileth; hide not thy Face from me, lest I be like unto those that go down into*

the

the Pit; *q. d.* Lord, make haſte and recover my languiſhing Soul; otherwiſe, whereas thou haſt now a *ſick Child*, thou wilt ſhortly have a *dead Child*.

And in like manner *Job* expoſtulated with him, *Job* 6. 1, 2, 3, 11, 12. *My grief is heavier than the ſand of the Sea, my words are ſwallowed up, for the Arrows of the Almighty are within me; and the poyſon thereof drinks up my ſpirits: The Terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me, what is my ſtrength that I ſhould hope? Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones? Or are my bones of braſs?* So *Chap.* 7. 12. *Am I a Sea, or a Whale?* &c. Other Troubles a Man may, but this he cannot bear, *Prov.* 18. 14. And therefore doubtleſs ſeaſonable and gracious revivings will come, *He will not ſtir up all his wrath, for he remembers thou art but fleſh; a wind that paſſeth away, and cometh not again*, Pſal. 78. 38, 39. He hath ways enough to do it, if he do but unvail his bleſſed Face, and make it ſhine again upon thee, Thou art ſaved, *Pſal.* 80. 3. The manifeſtations of his love, will be to thy Soul, as ſhowers to the parched *Graſs*; thy *Soul* that now droops and hangs the Wing, ſhall then revive and leap for joy, *Iſa.* 61. 1. A new Face ſhall come upon thy Graces, they ſhall bud again, and bloſſom as a Roſe; if he do but ſend a ſpring of Auxiliary Grace into thy Soul to actuate the dull habits of inherent Grace, the work is done; then ſhalt thou return to thy firſt works again, *Rev.* 2. 4, 5. and ſing, as in the days of thy youth.

Gratia gratiam poſtulat.

RE-

REFLECTIONS.

O this is my very case, saith many a poor Christian; this my Soul languishes and droops from day to day. 'Tis good news indeed, that God both can and will restore my Soul, but sad that I should fall into such a state. How unlike am I to what once I was! Surely, as the old Men wept, when they saw how short the second *Temple* come of the *glory* of the first, so may I sit down and weep bitterly, to consider how much my first Love, and first Duties excelled the present. For,

A Convictive Reflection.

1. Is my Heart so much in Heaven now, as it was wont to be? Say, O my Soul, dost thou not remember, when like the beloved Disciple thou layest in *Jesus* Bosom? How didst thou sweeten Communion with him? How restless and impatient wast thou in his absence! Divine withdrawments were to thee as the Hell of Hell: What a burden was the world to me in those days! Had it not been for *Conscience* of my *Duty*, I could have been willing to let all lye, that communion with Christ might suffer no interruption. When I awaked in the night, how was the darkness inlightned by the heavenly *glimpses* of the Countenance of my God upon me? How did his Company shorten those hours, and beguile the tediousness of the night? O my Soul, speak thy experience, is it now as it was then? No, no, those days are past and gone, and thou become much a stranger to that Heavenly Life. Art thou able with truth to deny this charge? When occasionally I pass by *those* places, which were once to me as *Jacob's Bethel* to him;

him; I sigh at the remembrance of former passages betwixt me and Heaven there; and say with *Job*, Chap. 29. *O that it were with me as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me, when his Candle shined upon my head, when by his light I walked through darkness, when the Almighty was yet with me, when I put on righteousness and it cloathed me, when my glory was fresh in me! When I remember these things, my Soul is poured out within me.*

2. Is thy obedience to the commands of Christ, and motions to Duty, as free and chearful as they were wont to be? Call to mind, my Soul, the Times when thou wast born down the stream of love to every Duty, if the Spirit did but whisper to thee, saying, *Seek my face*, How did my Spirit echo to his calls? saying, *Thy face, Lord, will I seek*, Psal. 27.8. If God had any work to be done, How readily did I offer my service? Here am I, Lord, send me. My Soul made me like the Chariots of *Aminadab*; Love oyled the Wheels of my Affections, and *his commandments were not grievous*, 1 Joh. 5 3. *Non tardat unctæ rota.* There were no such quarrellings with the command, no such excuses and delays as there are now. No, such was my Love to Christ, and delight to do his will, that I could no more keep back my self from Duty, than a Man that's carried away in a Crowd.

Or lastly, tell me, O my Soul, dost thou bemoan thy self, or grieve so tenderly for Sin, and for grieving the Holy Spirit of God, as thou wast wont to do? When formerly I had fallen by the hand of a Temptation; How was I wont to lye in Tears at the Lord's Feet, bemoaning my self? How did

did I haſten to my Cloſet, and there cry, like *Ezra*, Chap. 9. 6. *O my God, I am aſhamed, and bluſh to look up unto thee?* How did I ſigh and weep before him, and, like *Ephraim*, ſmite upon my Thigh, ſaying, *What have I done?* Ah my Soul! How didſt thou work, ſtrive, and caſt about, how to recover thy ſelf again? Haſt thou forgotten how thou wouldſt ſometimes look up and ſigh bitterly? Ah! What a God have I provoked? What Love and Goodneſs have I abuſed? Sometimes look in and weep, Ah! What motions did I withſtand? What a good Spirit have I grieved? Ah, my Soul, thou wouldſt have abhorr'd thy ſelf, thou could'ſt never have born it, had thine Heart been as ſtupid and as rentleſs then as now. If ever a poor Soul had reaſon to diſſolve it ſelf into Tears for its ſad Relapſes, I have.

A Supporting Reflection.

2. But yet Mourn not, O my Soul, as one without Hope. Remember, *There is hope in* Iſrael *concerning this thing.* As low as thy condition is, it is not deſperate, it is not a Diſeaſe that ſcorns a Remedy; many a Man that hath been ſtretcht out for dead, hath revived again, and lived many a comfortable day in the World; many a Tree that hath caſt both Leaf and Fruit, by the skill of a prudent Husbandman hath been recovered again, and made both flouriſhing and fruitful. Is it not eaſier think'ſt thou, to recover a languiſhing Man to health, than a dead Man to Life? And yet this God did for me, *Eph.* 2. 1. Is any thing too hard for the Lord? *Tho' my Soul draw nigh to the Pit, and my Life to the deſtroyers, yet he can*

ſend

send me a messenger, one among a thousand, that shall declare to me my uprightness; then shall he deliver me from going down into the Pit, my flesh shall be fresher than a Child's, and I shall return to the days of my youth, Job 33. 22. Though my Flourish, and much of my Fruit too be gone, and I am a withering Tree; yet as long as the Root of the matter is in me, there is more hope of such a poor, decayed, withered Tree, than of the Hypocrite that wants such a Root, in all his glory and bravery. His Sun shall set, and never rise again; but I live in expectation of a sweet Morning, after this dark Night.

Rouze up therefore, O my Soul, set thy Faith a work on Christ for quickning Grace, for he hath Life in himself, and quickens whomsoever he will, *John* 7. 38. Stir up that little which remains, *Rev.* 3. 2. Hast thou not seen lively flames proceed from glimmering and dying sparks, when carefully collected and blown up? Get amongst the most lively and quickning Christians; *as iron sharpens iron, so will these set an edge upon thy dull affections*, Prov. 27. 17. *Acts* 18. 15. But above all, cry nightily to the Lord for quickning, he will not despise thy cry. The moans of a distressed Child, work upon the Bowels of a tender Father. And be sure to keep within thy veiw, the great things of Eternity, which are ready to be revealed; live in the believing and serious Contemplations of them, and be dead if thou canst. 'Tis true, thou hast reason enough from thy condition, to be for ever humbled; but no reason at all from thy God, to be in the least discouraged.

The

The POEM.

THou art the Husbandman, and I
A worthless plot of Husbandry.
Whom special love did ne'rtheless
Divide from Nature's Wilderness.
Then did the Sun-shine of thy Face,
And sweet Illapses of thy Grace,
Like April Showers, and warming gleams,
Distil its Dews, reflect its Beams.
My dead Affections then were green,
And hopeful Buds on them were seen:
These into Duties soon were turn'd,
In which my heart within me burn'd.
O Halcyon days! thrice happy state!
Each place was Bethel, Heaven's Gate.
What sweet discourse! What heavenly talk!
Whilst with thee I did daily walk!
Mine Eyes o'reflow, my heart doth sink,
As oft as on those days I think.
For strangeness now is got between
My God and me, as may be seen
By what is now, and what was then;
'Tis just as if I were two Men.
My fragrant Branches blasted be,
No fruits like those that I can see.
Some Canker-worm lies at my Root,
Which fades my Leaves, destroys my Fruit.
My Soul is banish'd from thy sight,
For this it mourneth day and night.
Yet why dost thou desponding lye?
With Jonah cast a backward Eye.
Sue in thy God help may be had,
There's precious Balm in Gilead.

That God that made me ſpring at firſt,
When I was barren, and accurſt,
Can much more eaſily reſtore
My Soul to what it was before.
'Twas Heman's, Job's, *and* David's *caſe,*
Yet all recover'd were by Grace.
A word, a ſmile, on my poor Soul,
Will make it perfect, ſound, and whole.
A glance of thine hath ſoon diſſolv'd
A Soul in ſin, and grief involv'd.
Lord, if thou canſt not work the Cure,
I am contented to endure.

CHAP. VI.

Upon the Uncurableneſs of ſome Bad Ground.

No skill can mend the Miry Ground, and ſure
Some Souls the Goſpel leaves as paſt a Cure.

OBSERVATION.

ALthough the Induſtry and Skill of the Husbandman can make ſome Ground that was ſelels and bad, good for Tillage or Paſture, and mprove that which was barren, and by his coſt nd pains make an Acre worth ten; yet ſuch is he nature of ſome rocky or miry ground, where he Water ſtands, that there is no way to cleanſe t, and it can never be made fruitful. The *Husbandman* is fain to let it alone, as an incurable piece of waſte and worthleſs ground; and though the Sun and Clouds ſhed their Influences on it, as well

as

as upon better Land, yet that doth not at all mend it. Nay, the more Showers it receives, the worse it proves. For these do no way fecundate or improve it; nothing thrives there, but worthless Flags and Rushes.

APPLICATION.

MAny also there are under the Gospel, who are given over by *God* to judicial *blindness*, hardness of heart, a reprobate sense, and perpetual barrenness; so that how excellent soever the means are which they enjoy, and how efficacious soever to the Conversion, Edification and Salvation of others; yet they shall never do their Souls good. *Ezek.* 47. 9, 11. *Every thing whereſoever the River comes ſhall live, but the miry places thereof, and the Marishes thereof ſhall never be healed, but be given to ſalt*; (*i. e.*) given to an obstinate and everlasting barrenness. Compare *Deut.* 9. 23. By these Waters, saith Judicious Mr. *Strong*, understand the Doctrine only the Gospel, as *Rev* 21. 2. a River of Water of Life, clear as Chrystal. *Hic fluvius eſt uberrima doctrina Chriſti*, saith Mr. *Brightman*. This River is the most fruitful Doctrine of Christ, yet these Waters do not heal the miry Marish places (*i. e.*) men that live unfruitfully under Ordinances, who are compared to miry Marish places in three respects.

Spiritual Barrenness, p. 8.

(1.) In miry places the Water hath not free passage, but stands and settles there. So it is with these barren Souls; therefore the *Apostle* prays that the Gospel may run and be glorified, 2 *Thes.* 3. 1. The Word is said to run, when it meets with

no ſtop, *Cum libere propagatur*, when it is freely propagated, and runs through the whole Man; when it meets with no ſtop either in the Mouth of the Speaker, or Hearts of the Hearers, as it doth in theſe.

(2.) In a miry place, the Earth and Water is mixt together; this mixture makes mire. So when the Truths of God do mix with the corruptions of Men, that they either hold ſome Truths, and yet live in their Luſts; or elſe when Men do make uſe of the Truths of God to juſtifie and plead for their Sins. Or,

(3.) When as in a Miry place, the longer the Water ſtands in it, the worſe it grows; ſo the longer men abide under Ordinances, the more filthy and polluted they grow: Theſe are the miry places that cannot be healed, their Diſeaſes incurable, deſperate.

O this is a ſad caſe, and yet very common! Many Perſons are thus given over as incorrigible and hopeleſs, Rev. 22. 11. *Let him that is filthy, be filthy ſtill.* Jer. 6. 29. *Reprobate ſilver ſhall men call them, for the Lord hath rejected them.* *Iſa.* 6. *Go make the heart of this people fat, their ears dull,* &c.

Chriſt executes, by the Goſpel, that Curſe upon many Souls, which he denounced againſt the Fig-tree, Mat. 21. 19. *Let no fruit grow on the henceforth for ever, and immediately the fig-tree withered away.* To be given unto ſuch a condition, is a fearful judgment indeed, a Curſe with a witneſs; the ſum of all Plagues, miſeries and Judgments, a fatal ſtroke at the Root it ſelf. It's a woe to have a bad heart, (ſaith one) but its the depth of woe, to

have

have a Heart that ſhall never be made better. To be barren under the Goſpel is a ſore Judgment, but to have that *pertinax ſterilitas*, a pertinacious barrenneſs; this is to be twice dead, and pluckt up by the Root, as *Jude* ſpeaks.

And to ſhew you the woful and miſerable ſtate and plight of ſuch Men, let the following Particulars be weighed.

(1.) It's a ſtroke at the Soul it ſelf, an inward Spiritual Judgment; and by how much the more inward and ſpiritual any Judgment is, by ſo much the more dreadful and lamentable. As Soul-mercies are the beſt of Mercies; ſo Soul-judgments are the ſaddeſt of all Judgments. If it were but a Temporal ſtroke upon the Body, the loſs of an Eye, an Ear, a Hand, a Foot, tho' in it ſelf it would be a conſiderable loſs, yet it were nothing to this. *Omnia Deus dedit duplicia* (ſaith *Chryſoſtom*) ſpeaking of bodily Members; God hath given Men double Members, two Eyes, if one be loſt, the other ſupplies its wants; two Hands, two Ears, two Feet, that the failing of one, may be ſupplied by the help of the other; *Animam vero unam*; but one Soul, if that periſh, there is not another to ſupply its loſs. The Soul, ſaith a *Heathen*, is the Man, that which is ſeen is not the Man. The Apoſtle calls the Body, a vile Body, *Phil.* 3. 21. and ſo it is, compared with the Soul; and *Daniel* calls it the *Sheath*, which is but a contemptible thing to the *Sword*, which is in it. O it were far better that many Bodies periſh, than one Soul; that every Member were made the ſea-

Οὐκ ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος τὸ ὁρώμενον. *Plato.*

and ſubject of the moſt exquiſite Torture, than ſuch a Judgment ſhould fall upon the Soul.

(2.) It's the ſevereſt ſtroke God can inflict upon the Soul in this Life, to give it up to barrenneſs; becauſe it cuts off all hopes, fruſtrates all means, nothing can be a *bleſſing* to him. If one come from the dead, if *Angels* ſhould deſcend from Heaven to preach to him, there is no hope of him. If God ſhut up a Man, who can open? *Job* 12. 14. As there was none found in *Heaven* or *Earth* that could open the Seals of that Book, *Rev.* 5. 5. ſo is there no opening by the *hand* of the moſt able and skilful Miniſtry, thoſe Seals of hardneſs, blindneſs, and unbelief, thus impreſſed upon the Spirit. Whom Juſtice ſo locks up, Mercy will never let out. This is that which makes up the *Anathema Maranatha*, 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. which is the dreadfulleſt Curſe in all the Book of God, accurſed till the Lord come.

(3.) 'Tis the moſt indiſcernable ſtroke to themſelves that can be, and by that ſo much the more deſperate. Hence there is ſaid to be poured out upon them the Spirit of ſlumber, *Iſa.* 29. 10. *The Lord hath poured out upon you the Spirit of deep ſleep, and hath cloſed your Eyes.* *Montanus* renders it, The Lord hath mingled upon you the Spirit of deep ſleep. And ſo it is an Alluſion to a Soporiferous Medicine mingled, and made up of *Opium*, and ſuch like ſtupifactive Ingredients, which caſts a Man into ſuch a dead ſleep, that do what you will to him, he feels, he knows it not. *Make their eyes heavy, and their ears dull; leſt they ſhould ſee, and hear, and be converted,* Iſa. 6. 9, 10. This is the Heart that cannot repent, which is ſpoken of,

Rom. 2. 5. For men are not ſenſible at all of this Judgment, they do not in the leaſt ſuſpect it, and that is their miſery. Though they be curſed Trees which ſhall never bear any Fruit to Life, yet many times they bear abundance of other fair and pleaſant Fruits to the Eye, excellent Gifts, and rare Endowments; and theſe deceive and undo them. *Mat.* 7. 22. *We have prophefied in thy name*; this makes the Wound deſperate, that there is no finding of it, no Probe to ſearch it.

(4.) 'Tis a ſtroke that cuts off from the Soul all the comfort and ſweetneſs of Religion. A man may pray, hear and confer, but all thoſe Duties are dry ſtalks unto him, which yield no meat, no ſolid ſubſtantial nutriment; ſome common touches upon the Affections he may ſometimes find in Duty, the melting Voice or Rhetorick of the Preacher may perhaps ſtrike his natural Affections, as another Tragical Story Pathetically delivered may do; but to have any real Communion with God in Ordinances, any Diſcoveries or *Views* of the Beauty of the Lord in them, that he cannot have; for theſe are the ſpecial Effects and Operations of the Spirit, which are always reſtrained.

God hath ſaid to ſuch, as he did to them, *Gen.* 6. 3. *My Spirit ſhall no longer ſtrive with them*; and then what ſweetneſs is there in Ordinances? What is the Word ſeparated from the Spirit but a dead Letter? It's the Spirit that quickens, 2 *Cor.* 3. 2. Friend, thou muſt know that the Goſpel works not like *a natural cauſe* upon thoſe that hear it; if ſo, the effect would always follow, unleſs miraculouſly ſtopt and hindred; but it works like *a moral inſtitu-*

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ted *Cauſe*, whoſe efficacy and ſucceſs depends upon the arbitrary concurrence of the Spirit with it. *The wind blows where it liſteth, ſo is every one that is born of the Spirit*, John 3. 8. *Of his own will begot he us by the word of truth.* Ordinances are as the Pool of *Bethesda*, which had its healing virtue *only when* the *Angel* moved the Waters; but the Spirit never moves ſavingly upon the Waters of *Ordinances, for* the healing of theſe Souls, how many years ſoever they lye by them. Though others feel a Divine power in them, yet they ſhall not. As the Men that travelled with *Paul*, when Chriſt appeared to him from Heaven, they ſaw the light, but heard not the voice, which he heard to Salvation. So it is with theſe, they ſee the Miniſters, hear *the words*, which are words of Salvation to others, but not ſo to them. Concerning theſe Miſerable Souls, we may ſigh and ſay to Chriſt, as *Martha* did concerning her Brother *Lazarus*; Lord, if thou hadſt been here, in this Sermon, or in this Prayer, his Soul had not remained dead. But here is the woe that lyes upon him, God is departed from the Means, and none can help him.

(5.) 'Tis ſuch a ſtroke upon the Spirit of man as is a fearful ſign of his Eternal Reprobation. 'Tis true, we cannot poſitively ſay of a man in this Life, he is a Reprobate, one that God will never ſhew mercy to; but yet there are ſome propable Marks of it upon ſome men in this World, and they are of a trembling Conſideration where-ever they appear; of which this is one of the ſaddeſt, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, *If our Goſpel be hid, 'tis hid to thoſe that are loſt, in whom the God of this world hath*

blinded the minds of them which believe not; lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them. So *Acts* 13. 48. *As many as were ordained unto eternal life believed. Ye believe not, because ye are not of my Sheep,* John 10. 26. And again, *Mat.* 13. 11. *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom, but to them it is not given.* There cannot be a more dreadful Character of a Person marked out for wrath, than to continue under the Ordinances as the Rocks and Miry places do under the natural influences of Heaven. What blessed opportunities had *Judas*? He was under Christ own Ministry, he often heard the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; he was day and night in his Company, yet never the better: And why? Because he was the *Son of perdition*; that is, a Man appointed to Destruction and Wrath.

(6.) And lastly, to add no more. 'Tis such a stroke of God upon the Souls of Men, as immediately fore-runs Hell and *Damnation*, *Heb.* 6. 8 *But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto a cursing, whose end is to be burnt.* So that look as some Saints in this World have had a prelibation or foretaste of Heaven, which the *Scripture* calls *the earnest of the Spirit*; so this is a Precursor of Hell, a sign of wrath at the door. We may say of it, as 'tis said of the pale Horse in the *Revelation*, that Hell follows it. *If a man abide not in me,* (saith Christ,) *John* 15. 6. *he is cast forth as a branch and withered*; which is the very state of these barren, cursed Souls. And what follows? Why, saith he, men gather them, and cast them into the Fire,

Fire, and they are burned. Lo, this is the Vengeance which the Goſpel executes upon this barren ground.

REFLECTIONS.

The ſincere Soul's Reflection.

1. Well then, bleſſed be God that made me feel the ſaving power of the Goſpel. O, let God be exalted for ever for this mercy! That how defective ſoever I am in common Gifts, tho' I have a dull Underſtanding, a leaking Memory, a Shammering Tongue; yet I have felt, and do feel the power of the Goſpel upon my Heart. I bleſs thee (my God) that although I labour under many Spiritual Infirmities, yet I am not ſick of this incurable Diſeaſe. I have given thee indeed juſt cauſe to inflict and execute this dreadful *Curſe* upon me alſo, but thou haſt not *dealt* with me after my Deſerts; but according to the riches of thy *Mercy*. Some little *Fruit* I bring forth, and what it is, is by vertue of my Union with Jeſus Chriſt, *Rom.* 7. 4. And this hath more in it as to my comfort, than all the glittering Gifts and ſplendid Performances of the moſt glorious *Hypocrite* can yield to him. If I might have my choice (ſaith one) I would chuſe and prefer the moſt deſpicable and ſordid work of a ruſtick Chriſtian, before all the Victories of *Alexander*, and Triumphs of *Cæſar*. *Bleſſed therefore be the Lord, who hath abounded unto me in all ſpiritual bleſſings, in heavenly things in Chriſt Jeſus.*

I cannot remember a Sermon as another can, but bleſſed be God that I am able to ſavour it, and feel it; that I have an Heart to love, and a will to obey all that God diſcovers to be my Duty.

The Formal Professor's Reflection.

2. O, then how little cause have I to make my boast of *Ordinances*, and glory in my External Priviledges, who never bear Spiritual Fruit under them? If I well consider my condition, there is matter of *trembling*, and not of *glorying* in these things. It may be, while I have been glorying in them, and lifting up my secure Heart upon them, the Lord hath been secretly blasting my Soul under them, and insensibly executing this horrible Curse by them. Shall I boast, that with *Capernaum I am lifted up to Heaven*, since I may with them at last be cast down to Hell? And if so, Lord, what a Hell will my Hell be! It will be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* than for me. It drew Tears from the Eyes of *Christ*, when he was looking upon *Jerusalem*, under the same consideration that I doubt I have cause to look upon my own Soul, *Luk.* 19. 41. *He wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.* So long I have been a Hearer, a Professor of the Gospel, so many years I have injoyed its distinguishing Ordinances, but have they not been all dry and empty things to me? Hath not the Spirit of Formality acted me in them? Have not self ends and worldly respects lain at the bottom of my best Duties? Have not my Discourses in Communion with the Saints, been Trade words, speaking what I have learnt, but not felt? Sad is my condition now, but it would be desperate and irrecoverable, shouldst thou execute this Curse upon me.

3. And

3. And what may I think of my condition? Lord, I acknowledge my unprofitableneſs under the Means hath been ſhameful: and this hath made my condition doubtful. I have often trembled for fear, leſt my Root had been blaſted by ſuch a Curſe; but if ſo, whence is this trembling? Whence theſe fears and ſorrows about it? Doth ſuch Fruit grow in that Soyl which thou haſt Curſed? I am told but now, that on whom this Judgment falls, to them thou giveſt an Heart that cannot repent. Lord, I bleſs thee for theſe evidences of freedom from the Curſe; for the fruits of fear, ſorrow, and holy jealouſie. The Laws of men ſpare for the Fruits ſake, and wilt not thou ſpare me alſo my God, if there be found in me a bleſſing in the bud, *Iſa.* 65. 8?

The leſs fruitful Chriſtian's Reflections.

Romanæ leges pœnam pregnanti deferunt. Chryſoſt.

4. To conclude, what a ſerious Reflection ſhould this occaſion in every Diſpenſer of the Goſpel? How ſhould he ſay when he goes to preach the Goſpel, I am now going to preach that *word*, which is to be *a ſavour of Life or Death to the Soul*; upon how many of my poor Hearers may the Curſe of perpetual barrenneſs be executed this day! O how ſhould ſuch a thought melt his Heart into Compaſſion over them, and make him beg hard, and plead earneſtly with God for a better iſſue of the Goſpel than this upon them?

The Goſpel Preacher's Reflection.

The POEM.

YOU that beſides your pleaſant fruitful Fields,
Have uſeleſs Bogs, and rocky ground, that yields

You no advantage, nor doth quit your cost,
But all your pains and charges on them's lost.
Hearken to me, I'll teach you how to get
More profit by them, than if they were set
At higher Rents than what your Tenants pay
For your most fertile Lands; and here's the way.
Think when you view them, why the Lord hath chose
These, as the Emblems to decipher those
That under Gospel-grace grow worse and worse;
For Means are fruitless where the Lord doth curse.
Sweet Showers descend, the Sun his beams reflects
On both alike; but not with like effects.
Observe, and see how after these sweet Showers
The Grass and Corn revive; the fragrant Flowers
Shoot forth their beauteous heads, the Valleys sing,
All fresh, and green as in the verdant Spring.
But Rocks are barren still, and Bogs are so,
Where nought but Flags, and worthless Rushes grow.
Upon these Marish Grounds there lyes this Curse,
The more Rain falls, by so much more the worse.
Even so the Dews of Grace, that sweetly fall
From Gospel clouds, are not alike to all.
The gracious Soul doth germinate and bud,
But to the Reprobate it doth no good.
He's like the withered Fig-tree, void of Fruit;
A fearful Curse hath smote his very Root.
The Heart's made fat, the Eyes with blindness seal'd;
The piercing'st truth's the Gospel ere reveal'd,
Shall be to him but as the Sun and Rain
Are to obdurate Rocks fruitless and vain.
Be this your meditation when you walk
By Rocks and Fenny grounds, thus learn to talk

With your own Souls; and let it make you fear
Lest that's your case that is described here.
This is the best improvement you can make
Of such bad ground, good Soul, I pray thee take
Some pain about them; though they barren be,
Thou seest how they may yield sweet Fruits to thee.

CHAP. VII.

Upon the Plowing of Corn-land.

The Plowman guides his Plow with care and skill,
So doth the Spirit in sound Conviction still.

OBSERVATION.

IT requires not only strength, but much skill and judgment, to manage and guide the Plow. The Hebrew word חרש which we Translate to Plow, signifies to be intent, as an Artificer is about some curious piece of work. The Plow must neither go too shallow nor too deep in the Earth; it must not indent the Ground by making crooked Furrows, nor leap and make baulks in good Ground; but be guided as to a just depth of Earth, so to cast the Furrow in a straight line, that the floor or surface of the Field may be made plain. As it is *Isa.* 28. 25. And hence that expression, *Luke* 9. 62. *He that puts his hand to the Plow, and looks back, is not fit for the kingdom of Heaven.* The meaning is, that as he that plows must have his Eyes always forward, to guide and direct his hand in casting the furrows straight and even; (for his hand will be quickly

out when his eye is off.) So he that heartily resolves for Heaven, must addict himself wholly and intently to the business of Religion, and not have his Mind intangled with the things of this World, which he hath left behind him; whereby it appears, that the right management of the Plow requires as much skill as strength.

APPLICATION.

THis Observation in *Nature*, serves excellently to shadow forth this *Proposition* in *Divinity*; That the work of the Spirit in convincing and humbling the Heart of a Sinner, is a work wherein much of the Wisdom, as well as Power of God is discovered. The work of Repentance and saving Contrition, is set forth in Scripture by this Metaphor of Plowing; *Jer.* 4. 3. *Hos.* 10. 12. *Plow up your fallow ground*; that is, be convinced, humbled, and broken-hearted for Sin. And the resemblance betwixt both these Works, appears in the following Particulars.

Clarius Rhet. sacra, p 300.

Caryll in *Job* Chap. 4. v. 8.

(1.) 'Tis a hard and difficult work to Plow, it's reckoned one of the painfullest manual labours. It is also a very hard *thing* to convince and humble the Heart of a secure, stout, and proud sinner, indurate in wickedness. What *Luther* saith of a dejected Soul, *That it is as easie to raise the dead, as to comfort such a one:* The same I may say of the secure, confident Sinner: 'Tis as easie to rend the Rocks, as to work saving Contrition upon such a Heart. *Citius ex pumice aquam*; all the melting Lan-

Language and earnest Intreaties of the Gospel, can not urge such a Heart to shed a Tear: Therefore it's called a Heart of Stone, *Ezek.* 36. 26. a firm Rock, *Amos* 6. 12. *Shall horses run upon the rock? Will one plow there with Oxen?* Yet when the Lord comes in the Power of his Spirit, these Rocks do rend and yield to the Power of the Word.

(2.) The Plow pierces deep into the bosom of the Earth, makes (as it were) a deep gash or wound in the Heart of it, so doth the Spirit upon the Hearts of Sinners; he pierces their very Souls by Conviction, *Acts* 2. 37. *When they heard this, they were pricked* (or pierced point blank) *to the heart. Then the Word divides the Soul and Spirit, Heb.* 4. 12. It comes upon the Conscience with such piercing *dilemma*'s, and tilts the Sword of Conviction so deep into their Souls, that there is no stenching the Blood, no healing this Wound, till *Christ* himself come and undertake the Cure. *Hæret lateri lethalis arundo*; this barbed Arrow cannot be pulled out of their Hearts by any, but the hand that shot it in. Discourse with such a Soul about his Troubles, and he will tell you, that all the sorrow that ever he had in this World, loss of Estate, Health, Children, or whatever else, are but Flea-bitings to this; this swallows up all our Troubles. See how that Christian *Niobe*, *Luke* 7. 38. is dissolved into Tears. *Now deep calleth unto deep at the noise of his water spouts, when the waves and billows of God go over the Soul.* Spiritual sorrows are deep Waters, in which the stoutest and most *Magnanimous Soul* would sink and drown, did

Κατανύγηναν *Punctim cedo pungendi penetro.*

not

not *Jesus Christ*, by a secret and supporting Hand, hold it up by the Chin.

(3.) The Plow rends the Earth in parts and pieces, which before was united, and makes those parts hang loose, which formerly lay close. Thus doth the Spirit of Conviction rend in sunder the Heart, and its most beloved Lusts, *Joel* 2. 13. *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*; that is, rather than your Garments; for the sense is comparative, though the expression be negative. And this rending implies not only acute pain; flesh cannot be rent asunder without anguish, nor yet only force and violence; the Heart is a stubborn and knotty piece, and will not easily yield; but it also implies a disunion of parts united; as when a Garment, or the Earth, or any continuous Body is rent, those parts are separated which formerly cleaved together. Sin and the Soul were glewed fast together before, there was no parting of them, they would as soon part with their *Lives*, as with their *Lusts*; but now when the *Heart* is rent for them truly, it is also rent from them everlastingly, *Ez.* 7. 15, to 19.

(4.) The Plow turns up and discovers such things as lay hid in the Bosom of the Earth before, and were covered under a fair green surface from the Eyes of Men. Thus when the Lord plows up the Heart of a Sinner by Conviction, then the secrets of his Heart are made manifest, 2 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. the most secret and shameful Sins will then out; *For the Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing of the soul and spirit, the joints and marrow, and is a quick discerner of the thoughts and secret intents*

tents of the Heart, Heb. 4. 12. It makes the Fire burn inwardly, so that the Soul hath no rest till Confession give a vent to trouble. Fain would the shuffling Sinner conceal and hide his shame, but the word follows him through all his sinful shifts, and brings him at last to be his own, both Accuser, Witness, and Judge.

(5.) The work of the Plow is but *opus ordinabile*, a preparative work in order to Fruit. Should the Husbandman plow his ground never so often, yet if the *Seed* be not cast in and quickned, in vain is the Harvest expected. Thus Conviction also is but a preparative to a farther work upon the Soul of a Sinner. If it stick there, and go no farther, it proves but an abortive or untimely Birth. Many have gone thus far, and there they have stuck; they have been like a Field plowed, but not sowed, which is a matter of trembling consideration; for hereby their Sin is greatly aggravated, and their Eternal Misery so much the more increased. O when a poor Damned Creature shall with horror reflect upon himself in Hell, how near was I once under such a Sermon to Conversion? My Sins were set in order before me, my Conscience awakened and terrified with the guilt of them; many Purposes and Resolves I had then to turn to God, which had they been perfected by answerable Executions, I had never come to this place of *Torment*; but there I stuck, and that was my Eternal undoing. Many Souls have I known so terrified with the guilt of sin, that they have come roaring under horrors of Conscience to the Preacher; so that one would think such a breach had been made betwixt them

them and ſin, as could never be reconciled; and yet as angry as they were in that fit with ſin, they have hug'd and imbraced them again.

(6.) 'Tis beſt plowing when the Earth is prepared and mollified by the Showers of Rain, then the work goes on ſweetly and eaſily. And never doth the Heart ſo kindly melt, as when the Goſpel-Clouds diſſolve, and the free Grace and Love of *Jeſus Chriſt* comes ſweetly ſhowring down upon it; then it relents and mourns ingenuouſly, *Ezek.* 16. 63. *That thou maiſt remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou haſt done.* So it was with that poor Penitent, *Luke* 7. 38. when the Lord Jeſus had diſcovered to her the ſuper-abounding riches of his Grace, in the pardon of her manifold Abominations; her Heart melted within her, ſhe waſhed the Feet of *Chriſt* with Tears. And indeed, there is as much difference betwixt the Tears which are forced by the Terrors of the Law, and thoſe which are extracted by the Grace of the Goſpel, as there is betwixt thoſe of a *Condemned Malefactor*, who weeps to conſider the miſery he is under, and thoſe of a *pardoned Malefactor*, that receives his pardon at the foot of the Ladder, and is melted by the Mercy and Clemency of his gracious *Prince* towards him.

(7.) The Plow kills thoſe rank Weeds which grew in the Field, turns them up by the Roots, buries and rots them. So doth ſaving Conviction kill ſin at the Root, makes the Soul ſick of it, begets indignation in the *Heart* againſt it, 2*Cor.* 7. 11. The word Ἀγανάκτησιν there ſignifies the riſing of the

the Stomach, and being angry even unto ſickneſs; religious wrath is the fierceſt wrath, now the Soul cannot endure Sin, trembles at it. *I find a woman more bitter then death*, (ſaith penitent *Solomon*) *Eccl.* 7. 26. Conviction, like a Surfeit, makes the Soul to loath what it formerly loved and delighted in.

(8.) That Field is not well plowed, where the Plow jumps and skips over good ground, and makes baulks, it muſt run up the whole Field alike; and that Heart is not ſavingly convicted where any Luſt is ſpared and left untouched. Saving Conviction extends it ſelf to all ſins, not only to ſin in general, with this cold Confeſſion, *I am a ſinner*; but to the particulars of ſin, yea, to the particular circumſtances and aggravations of *time*, *place*, *manner*, *occaſions*, thus and thus have I done; to the ſin of *nature*, as well as *practiſe*, *Behold I was ſhapen in iniquity*, Pſal. 51. 5. There muſt be no *baulking* of any ſin; the ſparing of one ſin is a ſure Argument thou art not truly humbled for any ſin. So far is the convinced Soul from a ſtudious concealment of a beloved Sin, that it weeps over that more than over any other actual ſin.

(9.) New ground is much more eaſily plowed than that which by long lying out of Tillage is more conſolidated and clung together by deep-rooted Thorns and Brambles, which render it difficult to the Plowman. This old ground is like an old Sinner, that hath lain a long time hardening under the means of Grace. O the difficulty of convincing ſuch a Perſon! Sin hath got ſuch rooting in his Heart, he is ſo habituated to the reproofs and calls of the *Word*, that few ſuch are wrought upon.

How

How many young Persons are called to one obdurate, inveterate Sinner? I do not say but God may call home such a Soul at the eleventh Hour, but I may say of these, compared with others, as *Solomon* speaks, *Eccl.* 7. 28. *One man among a Thousand have I found*, &c. Few that have long resisted the Gospel, that come afterwards to feel the saving Efficacy thereof.

REFLECTIONS.

The true Convert's Reflection.

1. O Grace, for ever to be admired! That God should send forth his Word and Spirit to *plow* up my hard and stony Heart! Yea, mine, when he hath left so many of more tender, ingenuous, sweet, and melting Tempers, without any Culture, or Means of Grace. Oh blessed Gospel! Heart-dissolving Voice! I have felt thine Efficacy, I have experienced thy *Divine* and irresistible *Power*; thou art indeed sharper than any two-edged Sword, and woundest to the Heart, but thy wounds are the wounds of a Friend. All the wounds thou hast made in my Soul, were so many doors opened to let in Christ; all the blows thou gavest my Conscience, were but to beat off my Soul from sin, which I embraced, and had remained to my everlasting ruin, hadst thou not separated them and me. O Wise and Merciful Physician, thou didst indeed bind me with Cords of Conviction and Sorrow; but it was only to cut out that Stone in my Heart, which had killed me if it had continued there. Oh, how did I struggle and oppose thee, as if thou hadst come with the Sword of an Enemy,

my, rather than the Lance and Probe of a skilful and tender-hearted Physician? Blessed be the day wherein my sin was discovered and imbittered! O happy Sorrows which prepared for such matchless Joys! O blessed Hand which turned my Salt Waters into pleasant Wine, and after many pangs and sorrows of Soul didst bring forth the Manchild of Deliverance and Peace!

The Stubborn Heart's Reflection.

2. But Oh, what a Rock of Adamant is this Heart of mine, that never yet was wounded and savingly pierced for sin by the Terrors of the Law, or melting voice of the Gospel! Long have I sate under the Word, but when did I feel a relenting pang? O my Soul! My stupified Soul! Thou hast got an *Antidote* against Repentance, but hast thou any against Hell? Thou canst keep out the sense of sin now, but art thou able to keep out the Terrors of the *Lord* hereafter? If thou couldst turn a deaf Ear to the sentence of Christ in the day of Judgment, as easily as thou dost to the intreaties of Christ in the day of Grace, it were somewhat; but surely there is no defence against that. Ah, *Fool* that I am, to quench these *Convictions*, unless I knew how to quench those flames they warn me of.

The Miscarrying Soul's Reflection.

3. And may not I challenge the first place among all the Mourners in the World, who have lost those Convictions which at several times came upon me under the Word? I have been often awaken'd by it, and filled with terrors and tremblings under it; but those troubles have soon worn off again, and my Heart (like Water removed

moved from the Fire) return'd to its native coldneſs. Lord, What a diſmal caſe am I in? Many Convictions have I choaked and ſtrangled, which it may be ſhall never more be reviv'd, until thou revive them againſt me in Judgment. I have been in pangs, and brought forth nothing but Wind; my Troubles have wrought no deliverance, neither have my Luſts fallen before them: My Conſcience indeed hath been ſometimes ſick with ſin, yea, ſo ſick as to vomit them up by an external, partial reformation; but then with the Dog have I returned again to my Vomit, and now I doubt am given over to an Heart that cannot repent. Oh that thoſe travelling pangs could be quickned again! but alas! they are ceaſed. I am like a Priſoner eſcaped, and again recovered, whom the Jaylor loads with double Irons. Surely, O my Soul! if thy Spiritual Troubles return not again, they are but gone back to bring Eternal Troubles. It is with thee, O my Soul! as with a man whoſe Bones have been broken, and not well ſet; who muſt, (how terrible ſoever it appear to him) endure the pain of breaking and ſetting them again, if ever he be made a ſound man. O that I might rather chuſe to be the Object of thy wounding Mercy, than of thy ſparing Cruelty! If thou plow not up my Heart again by compunction, I know it muſt be rent in pieces at laſt by deſperation.

The POEM.

THere's skill in Plowing, that the Plowman knows,
For if too ſhallow, or too deep he goes,

The

The ſeed is either buried, or elſe may
To Rooks and Daws become an eaſie prey.
This, as a lively Emblem, fitly may
Deſcribe the bleſſed Spirit's work and way:
Whoſe work on Souls with this doth ſymbolize;
Betwixt them both thus the reſemblance lyes.
Souls are the Soyl, Conviction is the Plow;
God's Workmen draw, the Spirit ſhews them how.
He guides the work, and in good ground doth bleſs
His Workmens pains with ſweet and fair ſucceſs.
The heart prepar'd, he ſcatters in the ſeed,
Which, in its ſeaſon, ſprings, no Fowl nor Weed
Shall pick it up, or choak this ſpringing Corn,
Till it be houſed in the heavenly Barn.
When thus the Spirit plows up the fallow ground,
When with ſuch fruits his ſervants work is crown'd,
Let all the friends of Chriſt and Souls ſay now,
As they paſs by the Fields, God ſpeed the Plow.
Sometimes this Plow, thin, ſhelfy ground doth turn;
That little ſeed which ſprings, the Sun-beams burn.
The reſt uncovered lyes, which Fowls devour:
Alas! their hearts were touch'd, but not with power.
The cares and pleaſures of this world have drown'd
The ſeed, before it peep'd above the ground.
Some ſprings indeed, the Scripture ſaith that ſome
Do taſte the powers of the World to come.
Theſe Embrio's never come to timely Birth,
Becauſe the ſeed that's ſown wants depth of earth.
Turn up, O God, the bottom of my heart:
And, to the ſeed that's ſown, do thou impart
Thy choiceſt bleſſing. Though I weep and mourn
In this wet ſeed-time; if I may return
With ſheaves of joy; theſe fully will reward
My pains and ſorrows, be they ne'r ſo hard. CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Upon the Seed-Corn.

The choicest Wheat is still reserv'd for Seed,
But gracious Principles are choice indeed.

OBSERVATION.

HUsbandmen are very careful and curious about their Seed-Corn, that it may not only be clean and pure, but the best and most excellent in its kind, Isa. 28. 25. *He casteth in the principal Wheat.* If any be more full and weighty than other, that is reserved for Seed. 'Tis usual with Husbandmen to pick and lease their Seed-Corn by hand, that they may separate the Cockle and Darnel, and all the lighter and hollow Grains from it, wherein they manifest their discretion, for according to the vigour and goodness of the Seed, the fruit and production is like to be.

APPLICATION.

THE choice and principal Seed-Corn with which the Fields are sowed, after they are prepared for it, doth admirably shadow forth those excellent principles of Grace infused into the regenerate Soul. Their agreement, as they are both Seed, is obvious in the Ten following Particulars, and their excellency above other Principles in Seven more.

1. The Earth at first naturally brought forth Corn, and every Seed yielding Fruit, without humane Industry; but since the Curse came upon it, it must be plowed and sowed, or no Fruit can be expected.

xpected. So Man at first had all the Principles of Holiness in his nature, but now they must be infused by Regeneration, or else his nature is as void of holiness as the barren and untilled Desart is of Corn.

2. The earlier the Seed is sown, the better it is rooted and enabled to endure the Asperities of the Winter; so when Grace is early infused, when nature is sanctified in *the* Bud, Grace is thereby exceedingly advantaged: 'Twas *Timothy's* singular advantage that he knew the Scriptures of a Child.

3. Frosts and Snows conduce very much to the well-rooting of the Seed, and makes it spread, and take Root much the better. So do sanctified Afflictions, which usually the People of God meet with after their Calling, and often in their very seed-time, 1 Thes. 1. 6. *And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction.* But if they have fair Weather then, to be sure they shall meet with Weather hard enough afterwards, *Heb.* 10. 32. *But call to remembrance the former days, in which after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions.*

4. When the Seed is cast into the Earth, it must be covered up by the Harrow; the use whereof in Husbandry, is not only to lay a plain floor (as they speak) but to open and let in the Corn to the bosom of the Earth, and there cover it up for its security from Birds that would devour it. Thus doth the most wise God provide for the security of that Grace which he at first disseminated in the Hearts of his people. He is as well the Finisher as the Author of their Grace, *Heb.* 12. 2. And of this they

may

may be confident, that he that hath begun a good work in them, will perform it unto the day of Christ. The care of God over the Graces of his People, is like the covering of the seed for security.

5. Seed-corn is in its own nature of much more value and worth than other Corn; the Husbandman casts in the Principle-Wheat. So are the Seeds of Grace sown in the renewed Soul; for it's called, *The seed of God*, 1 John 3. 9. *The divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. One dram of Grace is far beyond all the glory of this World; it's more precious than Gold which perishes, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. *The price of it is above Rubies, and all that thou canst desire is not to be compared with it*, Prov. 3. 15.

6. There is a great deal of spirit and vigour in a little Seed, though it be small in bulk, yet it is great in vertue and efficacy. Gracious habits are also vigorous and efficacious things; such is their efficacy that they overcome the World. 1 John 5. 4. *Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the World.* They totally alter and change the Person in whom they are. *He that persecuted us in times past, now Preacheth the Faith which once he destroyed.* They enable the Soul to do and suffer great things for God, *Heb.* 11. 33, 34, 35.

7. The *stalk* and *ear* are potentially and virtually in a small Grain of Corn. So are all the fruits of obedience which Believers afterwards bring forth to God virtually contained *in* those habits or seeds of Grace. 'Tis strange to consider, that from a *Mustard-seed* (which, as Christ saith, is the least of all Seeds) should grow such great Branches, that the Birds of the Air may build their Nests in them.

Surely,

urely, the Heroical and Famous Acts and Atchievements of the moſt renowned Believers ſprang from ſmall beginnings at firſt, to that minency and glory.

8. The fruitfulneſs of the Seed depends upon he Sun and Rain, by which they are quickned, as s opened largely in the next Chapter. And the principles of Grace in us have as neceſſary a dependance upon the aſſiſting and exciting Grace without us. For though in be true, they are Immortal Seeds; yet that is not ſo much from their own ſtrength, as from the Promiſes made to them, nd that conſtant influx from above, by which hey are revived and preſerved from time to time.

9. The Seed is fruitful in ſome Soyls more than n others, proſpers much better, and comes ſooner o maturity. So doth Grace thrive better, and row faſter in ſome Perſons than in others. *Your aith groweth exceedingly*, 2 Theſ. 1. 3. *Whilſt the hings that are in others are ready to die*, Rev. 3. 2. Though no man's Heart be naturally a kind Soyl o Grace, yet doubtleſs Grace is more advantaged n ſome diſpoſitions than in others.

10. And laſtly, their Agreement as Seed appears in this, the Seed-corn is ſcattered into all parts of the Field, as proportionably and equally s may be. So is Grace diffus'd into all the Faculies; Judgment, Will, and all the Affections are owed with theſe new Principles *The God of peace anctifie you wholly*, 1 Theſ. 5. 23.

And thus you ſee why Principles of Grace are alled Seed. Now in the next place (which is the econd thing promiſed, and mainly deſigned in this Chapter)

Chapter) to ſhew you the choiceneſs and excellency of theſe holy Principles with which Sanctified Souls are embelliſht and adorned; and to convince you that true Grace excels all other Principles by which other Perſons are acted, even as the principal Wheat doth the Chaff, and refuſe ſtuff, I ſhall here inſtitute a compariſon betwixt Grace and the moſt ſplendid common Gifts in the World, and its tranſcendent Excellency above them all will evidently appear in theſe ſeven following Particulars.

1. The moſt excellent common Gifts come out of the common Treaſury of God's bounty, and that in a natural way. They are but the Improvement of a man's natural Abilities, or (as one calls them) the Sparks of nature blown up by the Wind of a more benign and liberal Education; but Principles of Grace are of a Divine and Heavenly original and extraction, not enduced or raiſed from *Nature*, but ſupernaturally infuſed by the Spirit from on high, *John* 3. 6. *That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh, and that which is born of the ſpirit is ſpirit.* When a Soul is ſanctified by them, *he partakes of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. *is born not of fleſh, nor of blood, nor of the will of Man, but of God*, John 1. 13. In this reſpect they differ from Gifts, as the heavenly *Manna* which was rained down from Heaven differs from common Bread, which by pains and induſtry the Earth produces in a natural way.

2. The beſt natural Gifts afford not that ſweetneſs and ſolid comfort to the Soul that *Grace* doth; they are but a dry ſtalk that affords no Meat for a Soul to feed on. A Man may have an underſtanding

ing full of light, and an heart void of comfort at the ſame time; but Grace is a Fountain of pureſt living ſtreams of Peace and Comfort, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Believing we rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory: Light is ſown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.* All true pleaſures and delights are ſeminally in Grace, *Pſalm* 97. 11. They are ſown for them in theſe Divine and Heavenly Graces, which are glory in the Bud.

Like a precious Stone in a Toad's Head.

3. Gifts adorn the Perſon, but do not ſecure the Soul from wrath. A Man may be admired for them among Men, and rejected Eternally by God. Who can conſiderately read that ſixth Chapter of the *Hebrews*, and not tremble to think in what a forlorn caſe a Soul may be, though ſet off and accompliſht with the rareſt Endowments of this kind, *Mat.* 7. 22? We read, that many ſhall ſay to *Chriſt* in that day, *Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name, and in thy name caſt out Devils*, &c. and yet themſelves at laſt caſt out as a prey to Devils. How Divinely and Rhetorically did a *Balaam* ſpeak and propheſie, *Numb.* 23? What rare and excellent Parts had the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*? Who upon that account were ſtiled *Principes ſeculi*, the Princes of the World, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. What profound and excellent Parts had the Heathen *Sages* and *Philoſophers*? Theſe things are ſo far from ſecuring the Soul againſt the wrath to come, that they often expoſe it unto wrath, and are as Oyl to increaſe the Eternal Burnings; but now gracious Principles are the τὰ ἔχομενα σωτηρίας, as the Apoſtle calls them, *Heb.* 6. Things that accom-

pany and have Salvation in them. These are the things on which the Promises of Salvation run; and these Treasures are never found but in Elect Vessels. Glory is by Promise assured and made over to him that possesses them. There is but a little point of Time betwixt him and the glorified Spirits above. And how inconsiderable a matter is a little Time, which contracts and winds up apace? For *now is our Salvation nearer than when we believed.* And hence the Scriptures speak of them as already saved, *Rom.* 8. 24. *We are saved by hope*, because its as sure as if we were in Heaven. We are made to sit in heavenly places.

4. Gifts may damnifie the Person that possess them; and it may be better in respect of a Man's own condition he had never had them. *Knowledge* (saith the Apostle) *puffeth up*, 1 Cor. 8. 1. makes the Soul proud and flatulent. 'Tis a hard thing to know much, and not to know it too much. The Saints knowledge is better than the Scholar's; for he hath his own heart instead of a Commentary to help him. *Aristotle* said, a little knowledge about heavenly things, though conjectural, is better than much of earthly things, though certain. *The world by wisdom knew not God*, (saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 12.) (*i. e.*) Their Learning hanged in their light, they were too wise to submit to the simplicity of the *Gospel*. The excellent Parts of the old Hereticks, did but serve to Midwife into the World the Monstrous *Birth* of Soul-damning Heresies. *Cupit abs te ornari diabolus*, as *Austin* said to that *ingenious* young Scholar; the Devil desires to be adorned by thee. But now Grace in it self is not subject to

to ſuch abuſes, it cannot be the proper *univocal cauſe* of any evil effect: It cannot puff up the Heart, but always humbles it; nor ſerve the Devil's deſigns, but ever oppoſes them.

5. Gifts may be given a Man for the ſake of others, and not out of love to himſelf; they are but as an excellent Diſh of Meat which a Man ſends to a Nurſe, not for her ſake ſo much as for his Child that ſucks her. God indeed makes uſe of them to do his Children good, the Church is benefited by them, though themſelves are but like Cooks, they prepare excellent Diſhes on which the Saints feed, and are nouriſhed, though themſelves taſte them not. They are *dona miniſtrantia, non ſanctificantia*, miniſtring but not ſanctifying Gifts, proceeding not from the good will of God to him that hath them, but to thoſe he benefits by them. And Oh, what a ſad Conſideration will this be one day to ſuch a Perſon to think, I helped ſuch a Soul to Heaven, while I my ſelf muſt lodge in Hell.

6. Sin in the raign and power of it, may cohabit with the moſt excellent natural Gifts under the ſame roof, I mean in the ſame Heart. A Man may have the Tongue of an *Angel*, and the Heart of a *Devil*. The wiſdom of the *Philoſophers* (ſaith *Lactantius*) *non excindit vitia ſed abſcondit*, did not root out, but hide their Vices. The Learned *Phariſees* were but painted Sepulchres; Gifts are but as a fair Glove drawn over a foul hand. But now Grace is incompatible with ſin in dominion; it puriſies the Heart, *Acts* 15. 9. cleanſes the Conſcience, *Heb.* 9. 14. crucifies the Affections and Luſts

of the Fleſh, *Gal.* 5. 24. is not content with the concealment, but ruin of Corruptions.

7. And laſtly, Gifts muſt leave us at laſt. *Whether there be knowledge, that ſhall ceaſe. All fleſh is graſs, and the goodlineſs of it as the flower of the graſs; the graſs withers, the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever*, Iſa. 40. 6, 8. Many times they leave a man before Death. One knock, if it hit right (as one ſaith) may make a Wiſe man a Fool. But to be ſure, they all leave us at death. *Doth not his excellency which is in him go away? Job* 4. 21. yea, then all natural excellency departs. Death ſtrips the Soul of all thoſe ſplendid Ornaments, then the Rhetorical Tongue is ſtruck Dumb; the nimble *Wit* and curious *Fancy* ſhall entertain your *Ears* with no more pleaſant *diſcourſes*. *Nunquam jocos dabis*, as *Adrian* ſaid to his departing Soul; but Grace aſcends with the Soul into Eternity, and there receives its perfection and accompliſhment. Gifts take their leave of the Soul, as *Orpha* did of *Naomi*; but Grace ſaith then as *Ruth*, *Where thou goeſt I will go, and where thou lodgeſt I will lodge, and nothing ſhall ſeparate thee and me.* Now put all this together, and then judge whether the Apoſtle ſpake Hyperboles, when he ſaid, *Covet earneſtly the beſt gifts, and yet I ſhew unto you a more excellent way*, 1 Cor. 12. *ult.* And thus you have the Choiceneſs of theſe Principles alſo.

REFLECTIONS.

The Gracious Soul's Reflection.

The Lines are fallen to me in a pleaſant place, may the gracious Soul ſay. How defective ſoever I am in Gifts, yet bleſſed be the Lord, who hath

hath ſown the Seeds of true Grace in my Heart. What tho' I am not famed and honoured among Men, let it ſuffice me that I am precious in the Eyes of the Lord. Tho' he hath not abounded to me in Gifts of Nature, *yet bleſſed be the God and Father of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath abounded to me in all ſpiritual bleſſings, in heavenly places, in Chriſt Jeſus*, Eph. 1. 3. Is not a true Jewel, tho' ſpurn'd in the dirt, more precious than a falſe one, tho' ſet in Gold? Why art thou troubled, O my Soul, for the want of theſe things which Reprobates may have? And art not rather admiring and bleſſing God for thoſe things which none but the Darlings and Favourites of Heaven can have? Is not an Ounce of pure Gold more valuable than many Pounds of gilded Braſs? What tho' the Dews of *Helicon* deſcend not upon my *Head*, if in the mean time the ſweet influences of *Sion* fall upon my *Heart*? O my God! how much ſoever others are elated by the light of their knowledge, I have cauſe with humility to adore thee for the heavenly heat with which thou haſt warmed my Affections.

The Deceived Soul's Reflection.

Pauſe a while my Soul upon this point. With what Seed is my Heart ſown, and of what kind are thoſe things wherein I excel others? Are they indeed ſpecial Seeds of *Grace*, or common Gifts and natural *Excellencies*? If the latter, little cauſe have I to *pride* my *ſelf* in them, were they ten thouſand times more than they are. If theſe things be indeed the things that accompany Salvation, the Seed of God, the true and real work of Grace, then (1.) How comes it to paſs that I never

found any throws or travelling pangs in the production of them? It's affirmed, and generally acknowledged, that the *new Creature* is never *brought* forth without such *pains* and compunctions of *heart* *Acts* 2. 37. I have indeed often felt an aking *head*, whilst I have read and studied to increase my knowledge; but when did I feel an aking *heart* for sin? Oh, I begin to suspect, that it is not right. Yea, (2.) And my suspicion increases whiles I consider that *Grace* is of an humbling nature, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. Lord, how have I been elated by my Gifts, and valued my self above what was meet? O how have I delighted in the noise of the *Pharisees* Trumpet! *Mat.* 6. 2. No Musick so sweet as that. Say, O my Conscience, have I not delighted more in the Theater, than the Closet? In the praise of Men, than the approbation of God? Oh, how many evidences dost thou produce against me? Indeed these are sad symptoms that I have shewed thee, but there is yet another which renders thy case more suspicious yet; yea, that which thou canst make no rational *defence* against, even the ineffectualness of all thy Gifts and Knowledge to mortifie any one of all thy Lusts. It's beyond all dispute, that Gifts may, but Grace cannot consist without Mortification of sin, *Gal.* 5. 24. Now what Lust hath fallen before these excellent Parts of mine? *Doth* not Pride, Passion Covetousness, and indeed the whole body of sin live and thrive in me as much as ever? Lord, I yield the cause, I can defend it no longer against my *Conscience*, which casts and condemns me by full proof, to be but in a wretched, cursed, lamentable state, notwithstanding

ing all my Knowledge and flouriſhing Gifts. O ſhew me a more excellent way. Lord! That I had the ſincerity of the pooreſt Saint; though I ſhould loſe the applauſe of all my Parts: With theſe I ſee I may go to Hell, but without ſome better thing no hope of Heaven.

The POEM.

GReat difference betwixt that Seed is found,
With which you ſow your ſeveral plots of ground.
Seed-wheat doth far excel in dignity,
The cheaper Barley, and the courſer Rye.
Though in themſelves they good and wholeſome are,
Yet theſe with choiceſt Wheat may not compare.
Mens hearts like Fields are ſow'd with different Grain;
Some baſer, ſome more noble, ſome again
Excelling both the former, more than Wheat
Excels that Grain your Swine and Horſes eat.
For Principles of meer Morality,
Like Cummin, Barley, Fitches, Peaſe, or Rye,
In thoſe Mens hearts are often to be found;
Whom yet the Scripture calleth curſed ground.
And nobler Principles than theſe ſometime
Call'd common Grace, and Spiritual Gifts which ſhine
In ſome Mens heads, where is their habitation;
Yet they are no Companions of Salvation.
Theſe purchaſe honour both from great and ſmall;
But I muſt tell thee that if this be all;
Though like an Angel in theſe Gifts thou ſhine,
Among blind Mortals for a little time:
The day's at hand when ſuch as thou muſt take
Thy Lot with Devils in th' infernal Lake.

But Principles of ſpecial ſaving Grace,
Whoſe ſeat is in the heart, not head or face,
Like ſolid Wheat ſown in a fruitful Field,
Shall ſpring and flouriſh, and at laſt will yield
A glorious Harveſt of Eternal Reſt,
To him that nouriſh'd them within his breaſt.
O Grace! How Orient art thou! How Divine!
What is the Glory of all Gifts to thine!
Diſſeminate this Seed within my heart,
My God I pray thee, though thou ſhouldſt impart
The leſs of Gifts; then I may truly ſay,
That thou haſt ſhew'd me the more excellent way.

CHAP. IX.

Upon Springing Weather after Seed-time.

By Heaven's influence, Corn and Plants do ſpring;
God's ſhowers of Grace do make his Valleys ſing.

OBSERVATION.

THE Earth after that it is plow'd and ſow'n, muſt be water'd and warm'd with the Dews and Influences of Heaven, or no Fruit can be expected. If God do not open to you his good Treaſure, the Heavens, to give Rain unto the Land in its ſeaſon, and bleſs all the work of your hands, as it is *Deut.* 28. 12. The Earth cannot yield her increaſe. The order and dependance of natural cauſes in the productions of Fruit, is excellently deſcribed, *Hoſ.* 2. 21, 22. *I will hear the Heavens, and*

and they ſhall hear the Earth; and the Earth ſhall hear the Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and they ſhall hear Jezreel. Jezreel muſt have Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, or they cannot live; they cannot have it unleſs the *Earth* bring it forth, the *Earth* cannot bring it forth without the Heavens, the Heavens cannot yield a drop unleſs God hear them; that is, unlock and open them. * Nature and natural Cauſes are nothing elſe but the order in which God works. This ſome *Heathens* by the light of Nature acknowledged, and therefore when they went to plow in the Morning, they did lay one hand upon the *Plow* (to ſpeak their own part to be painfulneſs) and hold up the other hand to *Ceres* the *Goddeſs* of *Corn*, to ſhew that their expectation of plenty was from their ſuppos'd Deity. I fear many *Chriſtians* lay both *hands* to the Plow, and ſeldom lift up heart or hand to God, when about that Work. There was an Husbandman (ſaith Mr. *Smith*) that always ſowed good *Seed*, but never had good *Corn*; at laſt a Neighbour came to him, and ſaid, I will tell you what probably may be the cauſe of it; it may be (ſaid he) you do not ſteep your Seed; no truly, ſaid the other, nor ever did I hear that Seed muſt be ſteeped; yes ſurely, ſaid his Neighbour, and I will tell you how, it muſt be ſteeped in Prayer. When the party heard this, he thanked him for his Counſel, reformed his fault, and had as good Corn as any Man whatſoever. Surely, it is not the Husbandman's,

* *Natura nihil aliud eſt quam divinorum operum ordo.* Brentius.

Weem's Cerem. Law.

Smith's Eſſex Dove.

bandman's, but *God's* steps that drop fatneſs. *Alma mater terra*, the Earth indeed is a fruitful Mother, but the Rain which fecundates and fertilizes it, hath no other Father but God, *Job* 38. 28.

APPLICATION.

AS impoſſible it is (in an ordinary way) for *Souls* to be made fruitful in *Grace* and Holineſs, without the Dews and Influences of Ordinances, and the bleſſing of God upon them, as for the Earth to yield her Fruit without the natural influences of Heaven; for look, what Dews, Showers, and clear ſhinings after Rain are to the Fields, that the Word and Ordinances of God are to the Souls of Men. *My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain, my ſpeech ſhall diſtil as the dew, as the ſmall rain upon the tender herb, and as the ſhowers upon the graſs*, Deut. 32. 2. *For as the rain and ſnow cometh down from heaven, and watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud; ſo ſhall my word be that goeth forth of my mouth*, *Iſa.* 55. 10. 11. And as the Doctrine of the Goſpel is Rain, ſo Goſpel Miniſters are the Clouds in which thoſe heavenly Vapours are bound up. The reſemblance lyes in the following Particulars.

1. The Rain comes from Heaven, *Acts* 14. 17. *He gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons*, &c. The Doctrine of the Goſpel is alſo of an heavenly extraction and deſcent, they are heavenly Truths which are brought to you in earthen Veſſels, things that were hid in God, and come from his Boſom, *Eph.* 3. 8, 9. What *Nicodemus* ſaid of Chriſt, is in a proportion true of every faithful diſpenſer of the Go-

Goſpel, *Thou art a teacher come from God, Joh.* 3. 2. You are not to look upon the Truths which Miniſters deliver, as the meer effects and fruits of their Inventions and Parts, they are but the Conduits through which thoſe Celeſtial waters are *conveyed* to you. 'Tis all heavenly, the *Officers* from Heaven, *Eph.* 4. 12. Their *Doctrine* from Heaven; *Eph.* 3. 8, 9. The *Efficacy* and *Succeſs* of it from Heaven, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. *What I received of the Lord* (ſaith *Paul*) *that have I delivered unto you*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. The ſame may every Goſpel Miniſter ſay too; That's the firſt.

And then (2*dly.*) The Rain falls by Divine direction and appointment; *He cauſes it to rain upon one City, and not upon another*, *Amos* 4. 7. You ſhall often ſee a Cloud diſſolve and ſpend it ſelf upon one place, when there is not a drop within a few Miles of it. Thus is the Goſpel ſent to ſhed it's rich influences upon one place, and not upon another; it pours down ſhowers of bleſſings upon one Town or Pariſh, whilſt others are dry like *the* ground which lay near to *Gideon's* wet *Fleece. To you is the word of this ſalvation ſent*, *Acts* 13. 26. *Sent*, it comes not by *chance*, but by *commiſſion* and appointment, and it's ſent *to you* by ſpecial direction. Miniſters can no more go whither they pleaſe then the ſailing Clouds can move againſt the Wind. *Paul* and *Timothy*, two fruitful Clouds (that ſent down many ſweet refreſhing ſhowers upon every place whither they came) the Lord ſent them through *Phrygia* and *Galatia*, but forbad them to preach the Word in *Aſia*, *Acts* 16. 6. *And when they eſſayed to go into Bithynia, the ſpirit ſuffered them not*,

not, *v.* 7. But a Man of *Macedonia* appears to *Paul in* a Vision, and prayed him, *saying, Come over to Macedonia and help us*, v. 9. Thus you see how the *Mystical*, as well as the *natural* Clouds, are moved according to Divine Counsel; and though Ministers are not now disposed to their respective places, in such an Extraordinary way, yet there is still a special hand of the Spirit guiding their motions, which is seen partly in qualifying them for such a people, and partly in drawing out their hearts to elect and call them, and inclining their hearts to accept the Call.

3. There is a great deal of difference in the showers of Rain that fall upon the Earth. Sometimes you have an hasty shower, which makes the Ways float, and the Streets run, but it's gone presently, the Earth hath but little benefit by it; and sometimes you have a sweet, gentle, soaking rain, that moderately soaks to the Roots, and refreshes the Earth abundantly. This is called the *small rain*, and the former, *the great rain of his strength*, *Job* 37. 6. So it is in these Spiritual showers, the effects of some Sermons, (like a sudden spout of Rain) are very transient, that touch the heart a little for present, by way of Conviction or Comfort, but it fleets away immediately, *Jam.* 1. 23. At other times the Gospel, like a setled moderate Rain, soaks to the Root, to the very Heart. So did that sweet shower which fell, *Acts* 2. 37. It searched the Root, it went to the Heart; the influences of it are sometimes abiding, and do much longer remain in, and refresh the Heart, than the rain doth the Earth. There be effects left in some hearts,

hearts, by ſome Sermons and Duties, that will never out of it as long as they live, *I will never forget thy precepts, for by them thou haſt quickned me*, Pſal. 119. 93.

The Rain is moſt beneficial to the Earth, when there come ſweet, warm Sun blaſts with, or after it. This the Scripture calls, *a clear ſhining after rain*, 2 Sam. 23. 4. by which the *ſeminal virtue* of the Earth is drawn forth, and then the Herbs and Flowers, and Corn ſprout abundantly. So it is with Goſpel ſhowers, when the Sun of Righteouſneſs opens upon poor Souls under the Word, darting down the Beams of Grace and Love upon them, whilſt they are attending on it, (juſt as you ſometimes ſee a ſweet ſhower fall while the Sun ſhines out) O how comfortable is this, and effectual to melt the heart! And as the warm Rain is moſt refreſhing, ſo when the word comes warmly from the melting Affections of the Preacher, who imparts not only the Goſpel, but his own Soul with it, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 8. This doth abundantly more good than that which drops coldly from the Lips of the unaffected Speaker.

5. Showers of Rain do exceedingly refreſh the Earth, as a Man is refreſhed by a draught of *Water*, when his Spirits are even ſpent. O how welcome is a ſhower to the thirſty ground! Hence the little Hills are ſaid to rejoice on every ſide, yea to ſhout for joy, and ſing when a ſhower comes, *Pſa.* 65. 12, 13. But never was ſhower of Rain ſo ſweetly refreſhing to the thirſty Earth, as Goſpel-ſhowers are to gracious Hearts, *Col.* 4. 8. it comforts their very Hearts. What joy was there in *Samaria*

when

when the Gospel came to that place? *Acts* 8. 8. It revives the Soul, 'tis *mel in ore, melos in aure, jubilum in corde*, Honey in the Mouth, Melody in the Ear, and a very Jubilee in the Heart.

6. Rain is necessary at Seed-time, to make ready the Earth to receive the Seed, *Psa.* 65. 9, 10. *Thou Visitest the earth, and watereſt it; thou greatly inricheſt it with the River of God, which is full of water; thou prepareſt them Corn, when thou haſt ſo provided for it; thou watereſt the ridges thereof abundantly, thou ſetteſt the furrows thereof, thou makeſt it ſoft with ſhowers, thou bleſſeſt the ſpringing thereof.* And this the Scripture calls the former Rain. And as this is neceſſary about Seed-time, ſo the latter *Rain* is as needful about earing-time, to diſcloſe the ear, and to bring it to perfection; both theſe are great Bleſſings to the Earth, and conduce to a plentiful Harveſt, *Joel* 2. 23. 24. *Be glad then ye children of Sion, and rejoyce in the Lord your God, for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cauſe to come down for you the rain, the former and the latter rain in the firſt month, and the floors ſhall be full of Wheat, and the fats ſhall overflow with Wine and Oyl.* Thus the Goſpel hath a double uſe and benefit alſo. It's neceſſary as the former Rain at Seed-time, it cauſes the firſt ſpring of Grace in the Heart *Pſa.* 19. 7. And there could be, (in an ordinary way) no ſpring of Grace without it, *Prov.* 29. 18. And as this former Rain is neceſſary to cauſe the firſt ſpring of Grace, ſo alſo it hath the uſe of the latter Rain to ripen thoſe precious Fruits of the Spirit in the Souls of Believers, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evan-*

Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt. Were all the elect converted unto God, yet ſtill there would be a neceſſity of a Goſpel Miniſtry.

7. After a great glut of Rain, uſually there comes a drought; 'tis a common Country Proverb *Wet and dry pay one another.* And truly when a people are glutted with a fulneſs of *Goſpel-mercies*, it's uſual with God to ſhut up and reſtrain the Goſpel-clouds, that for a time (at leaſt) there be no Dews upon them, and thereby teach them to prize their deſpiſed (becauſe common) mercies at an higher rate. For as a good man once ſaid, mercies are beſt known by the back, and moſt prized *when moſt* wanted. *In thoſe days the Word of the Lord was precious, there was no open Viſion*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 1. It is with ſpiritual as with temporal Food, *ſlighted when* plenteous, but if a Famine once come, then every bit of bread is precious. *Jeruſalem* remembred in the days of her affliction, and of her miſery, all her pleaſant things that ſhe had in the days of old, *Lam.* 1. 7. 'Tis both a ſinful and dangerous thing to Wantonnize with Goſpel mercies, and deſpiſe the plaineſt (if faithful) Miniſters of the Goſpel. The time may come when you may be glad of the plaineſt Sermon, from the mouth of the meaneſt Embaſſador of Chriſt.

8. To conclude, the Prayers of Saints are the Keys that open and ſhut the natural Clouds, and cauſe

cauſe them either to give out, or with-hold their influences, *James* 5. 18. *Elias was a man ſubject to like paſſions as we are, and he prayed earneſtly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the ſpace of three years and ſix months; and he prayed ag ain, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth fruit.* God hath ſubjected the works of his hands to the Prayers of his Saints, *Iſa.* 45. 11.

Prayer is alſo the golden Key which opens theſe Myſtical Goſpel clouds and diſſolves them into ſweet gracious ſhowers. God will have the whole work of the Miniſtry carried on by the Prayers of his people, they firſt obtain their Miniſters by prayer, *Luk.* 10. 2. *Pray ye the Lord of the Harveſt, to ſend forth labourers into the vineyard.* It is by the help of Prayer, that they are carried on, and enabled to exerciſe their Miniſtry. They may tell their people as a great General once told his Soldiers, *That he Flew upon their wings. Pray for me* (ſaith the great Apoſtle) *that utterance may be given me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the myſteries of the Goſpel,* Eph. 6. 19. Yea by the Saints Prayers it is, that Miniſters obtain the ſucceſs and fruits of their Labours, 2 *Theſſ* 3 1. *Finally Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free courſe, and be glorified, even as it is with you.* And thus you have the Metaphor opened. Now, Oh! that theſe Truths might come down in ſweet ſhowers upon the Hearts both of *Miniſters* and People, in the following Reflections.

REFLECTIONS.

3. Reflections for Gospel-Ministers.

1. Am I then a Cloud? And is my Doctrine as Rain to water the Lord's Inheritance; And yet do I think it much to be tossed up and down by the furious Winds and Storms of Persecution? Do not I see the Clouds above me in continual motions and agitations? And shall I Dream of a fixed setled state? No, false Teachers, who are Clouds without Rain, are more likely to enjoy that than I. Which of all the Prophets have not been tossed and hurried worse than I? *Acts* 7. 52. He that will not let Men alone to be quiet in their Lusts, must expect but little quiet from Men in this Life. But it is enough Lord, that a Rest remaineth for thy Servant; let me be so wise to secure a Rest to come, and not so vain to expect it on Earth.

2. And, O that I might study those instructing Clouds, from which, as from the Bottles of Heaven, God pours down refreshing showers to quench and satisfie the thirsty Earth! In this I may resemble them, and come amongst the people of the Lord, *in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ*, Rom. 15. 29. O let not those thirsty Souls that wait for me as for the Rain, Job 29 23. *return like the Troops of Tema, asham'd, with their heads cover'd*, Job 6. 19. O that my Lips might refresh many! Let me never be like those empty Clouds which deceive the hopes of thirsty Souls; but let my Doctrine descend as the Rain, and distil as the Dew, and let that Plot of thine Inheritance which thou hast assigned to me, be as a Field which the Lord hath blessed.

3. Once

3. Once more, lift up thine eyes to the Clouds and behold, to how great an height the Sun hath mounted them, for by reason of their sublimity it is that they are called the Clouds of Heaven, *Mat.* 24. 30. Lord, let me be a Cloud of Heaven too! Let my Heart and Conversation be both there! Who is more advantaged for an heavenly Life than I? Heavenly Truths are the Subjects of my daily study, and shall earthly things be the Objects of my daily Delights and Loves? God forbid that ever my earthly Conversation should contradict and Shame my heavenly Calling and Profession; Shine forth thou glorious Sun of Righteousness, and my Heart shall quickly be attracted and mounted above these visible Clouds, yea, and above the aspectable Heavens.

3. Reflections for private Christians.

For those that want a Gospel Ministry.

1. Is the Gospel Rain, and its Ministers *Clouds*? Wo is me then. that my Habitation is upon the Mountains of *Gilboa*, where there are no Dews! Ah sad Lot that I should be like *Gideon*'s dry Fleece, whilst the ground round about me is wet with the Dew of Heaven! O thou that commandest the Clouds above, and openest the Windows of Heaven, remember, and refresh this parched Wilderness, wherein I live, with showers of Grace, that we may not be as the Heath in the Desart, which seeth not when good cometh, nor inhabit the parched places of the Wilderness.

For those that enjoy a Gospel-Ministry.

2. O Lord, Thou hast caused the Heavens above me to be black with Clouds, thou openest the Celestial

Case-

Caſements from above, and daily ſendeſt down ſhowers of Goſpel-bleſſings; O that I might be as the parched Earth under them! not for barrenneſs, but for thirſtineſs. Let me ſay, *My ſoul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord*; that I might there ſee the Beauty of the Lord. Doth the Spungy Earth ſo greedily ſuck up the ſhowers, and open as many Mouths as there are clefts in it, to receive what the Clouds diſpenſe? And ſhall thoſe pretious Soul-inriching ſhowers fleet away unprofitably from me? If ſo, then,

For unprofitable Hearers.

3. What an account have I to make for all thoſe Goſpel-bleſſings that I have enjoyed? For all thoſe Goſpel dews and ſhowers wherewith I have been watered? Should I be found fruitleſs at laſt, it will fare better with the barren and uncultivated Wilderneſs than with me; more tolerable for *Indians* and *Barbarians* that never heard the Goſpel, than for me that have been ſo aſſiduouſly and plenteouſly water'd by it. Lord! What a difference wilt thou put in the great day, betwixt ſimple and pertinacious barrenneſs? Surely, if my root be not barrenneſs, ſuch heavenly waterings and influences as theſe, will make it ſprout forth into fruits of obedience.

The POEM.

THE Vegetables here below depend
Upon thoſe Treaſures which the Heavens do ſpend
Moſt bounteouſly upon them, to preſerve
Their being, and their beauty. This may ſerve

To

To ſhadow forth a heavenly Myſtery,
Which thus preſents it ſelf before your Eye.
As when the Sun draws near us in the Spring,
All Creatures do rejoyce, Birds chirp and ſing:
The face of Nature ſmiles, the Fields adorn
Themſelves with rich Embroideries: The Corn
Revives, and ſhooteth up, the warm ſweet Rain
Makes Trees and Herbs ſprout forth and ſpring amain.
Walk but the Fields in ſuch a fragrant Morn,
How do the Birds your Ears with Muſick Charm!
The Flowers their flaming Beauties do preſent
Unto your Captiv'd Eyes; and for their ſcent,
The ſweet Arabian Gums cannot compare;
Which thus perfume the circumambient Air.
So, when the Goſpel ſheds its chearing Beams
On gracious Soul's, like thoſe ſweet-warming gleams,
Which God ordains in Nature, to draw forth
The virtue ſeminal that's in the Earth;
It warms their Hearts, their languid Graces chears,
And on ſuch Souls a ſpring-like face appears.
The gracious ſhowers theſe ſpiritual Clouds do yield,
Inriches them with ſweetneſs; like a Field
Which God hath bleſt. Oh 'tis exceeding ſweet,
When gracious hearts and heavenly truths do meet.
How ſhould the hearts of Saints within them ſpring,
When they behold the Meſſengers that bring
Theſe gladſome Tydings? Yea, their very Feet
Are beautiful, becauſe their meſſage ſweet.
Oh what a Mercy do thoſe Soul's enjoy,
On whom ſuch Goſpel dews fall day by day!
Thrice happy Land which in this pleaſant Spring,
Can hear theſe Turtles in her Hedges ſing.
O prize ſuch Mercies; if you ask'd me why?
Read on, you'll ſee there's reaſon by and by. CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Upon a Dearth through want of Rain.

If God restrain the showers, you howl and cry;
Shall Saints not mourn when Spiritual Clouds are dry?

OBSERVATION.

IT is deservedly accounted a sad Judgment, when God shuts up the Heavens over our Heads, and makes the Earth as Brass under our Feet, *Deut.* 28. 23. Then the Husbandmen are called to mourning, *Joel* 1. 11. All the Fields do languish, and the bellowing Cattel are pined with thirst. Such a sad state the Prophet Rhetorically describes, *Jer.* 14. 3, 4, 5, 6. *The Nobles have sent their little ones to the Waters, they came to the Pits and found no Water; they returned with their Vessels empty, they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their Heads; because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the Earth, the Plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads: Yea, the Hinde also calved in the field, and forsook it, because there was no grass: And the wild Asses did stand in the high Places, they snuffed up the wind like Dragons, their Eyes failed because there was no grass.*

And that which makes the want of Rain so terrible a Judgment, is the Famine of Bread, which necessarily follows these extraordinary Droughts, and is one of the sorest Temporal Judgments which God inflicts upon the World.

APPLI-

APPLICATION.

AND truly, as much cauſe have they to weep and tremble, over whoſe Souls *God* ſhuts up the Spiritual Clouds of the Goſpel, and thereby ſending a Spiritual Famine upon their Souls. Such a Judgment the Lord threatens in *Amos* 8. 11. *Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will ſend a famine in the Land, not a famine of Bread, nor a thirſt for Water; but of hearing the Word of the Lord.* The meaning is, I will ſend a more fearful Judgment, than that of the Famine of Bread; for this Particle [not] is not *excluſive*, but *exceſſive*; implying, that a Famine of Bread is nothing, or but a ſlight Judgment, compared with the Famine of the Word. Parallel to which is that Text, *Iſa.* 5. 6. *I will lay it waſte* (ſaith God of the fruitleſs Church) *it ſhall not be pruned nor digged, but there ſhall come up briars and thorns; I will alſo command the Clouds, that they rain not upon it.* And we find both in Humane and Sacred Hiſtories, that when God hath ſhut up the Spiritual Clouds, removing or ſilencing his Miniſters; ſenſible Chriſtians have ever been deeply affected with it, and reckon'd it a moſt tremendous Judgment. Thus the Chriſtians of *Antioch*, when *Chryſoſtom* their Miniſter was baniſhed, * they judged it better to loſe the Sun out of the Firmament than loſe that, their Miniſter. And when *Nazianzen* was taking his leave of *Conſtantinople*, as he was Preaching his *Farewel-Sermon*, the People were exceedingly affected with his loſs; and among

* *Satius eſt ut ſol non luceat, quam ut non doceat.* Chryſoſtomus.

among the reſt, an old man in the Congregation fell into a bitter paſſion, and cryed out, *Aude pater & tecum Trinitatem ipſam ejice.* (*i.e.*) Go farther, if you dare, and take away the whole Trinity with you; meaning, that God would not ſtay when he was gone. How did the Chriſtian of *Antioch* alſo weep and lament, when *Paul* was taking his farewell of them? *Acts* 20. 37, 38. He had been a cloud of Bleſſings to that place, but now they muſt expect no more ſhowers from him. Oh, they knew not how to give up ſuch a Miniſter! When the Ark of God (which was the Symbol of the Divine Preſence among the *Jews*) was taken, *all the City cried out*, 1 Sam. 4. 13. O, the loſs of a Gospel miniſtry is an inеſtimable loſs! Not to be repaired but by its own return, or by Heaven. Mr. *Greenham* tells us, that in the Times of Popiſh Perſecution, when godly Miniſters were halled away from their Flocks to *Martyrdom*, the poor Chriſtians would meet them in the way to the Priſons or take, with their little ones in their Arms, and throwing themſelves at their Feet, would thus beſeak them: "What ſhall be our Eſtate, now you are gone to *Martyrdom?* Who ſhall inſtruct theſe poor Babes? Who ſhall eaſe our afflicted Conſcienees? Who ſhall lead us in the way of Life? Recompence unto them, O Lord, as they have deſerved, who are the cauſes of this, Lord give them ſad Hearts. *Quis talia fando, temperet a lachrymis?* And to let you ſee there is ſufficient ground for this ſorrow, when God reſtrains the influences of the Goſpel, ſolemnly conſider the following Particulars.

1. That

1. That it is a dreadful Token of God's great anger against that People from whom he removes the Gospel. The anger of God was fearfully incensed against the Church of *Ephesus*, when he did but threaten to come against her, and remove the Candlestick out of its place, *Rev.* 2. 5. 'Tis a stroke at the Soul, a blow at the Root; usually the last, and therefore the worst of Judgments. There is a Pedigree of Judgments, first *Gomer* bears *Jezreel*, next *Loruhama*, and at last brings forth *Loammi*, Hos. 1. 4, 6, 8, 9.

2. There is cause of mourning, if you consider the deplorable estate in which all the unregenerate Souls are left, after the Gospel is removed from them. What will become of these? Or by whom shall they be gathered? It made the Bowels of Christ yearn within him when he looked upon the scattered multitude that had no Shepherd, *Mat.* 9. 36. What an easie Conquest doth the Devil now make of them? How fast doth Hell fill in such Times? Poor Souls being driven thither in droves, and none to rescue them! *Matthew Paris* tells us that in the Year 1072. when Preaching was suppressed at *Rome*, Letters were then framed as coming from Hell; wherein the Devil gave them thanks for the multitude of *Souls* they had sent to him that year. But truly we need not talk of Letters from Hell, we are told from Heaven, how deplorable the Condition of such poor Souls is. See *Prov.* 28. 19. Hos. 4. 6. Or,

3. The Judgment will yet appear very heavy if you consider the loss which God's own People sustain by the removal of the Gospel; for therein the

they lose (1.) Their chief glory, *Rom.* 3. 2. the principal thing in which the peculiar *Glory* of *Israel* consisted was this, *That unto them was committed the Oracles of God.* On that account it was called the glorious Land, *Dan.* 11. 16. This made them greater than all the Nations round about them, *Deut.* 4. 7, 8. (2.) By losing the Ordinances, they lose their quicknings, comforts, and Soul-refreshments; for all these are sweet streams from the Gospel Fountain, *Psal.* 119. 50. *Col.* 4. 8. No wonder then to hear the people of God complain of dead hearts when the Gospel is removed. (3.) In the loss of the Gospel they lose their defence and safety. This is their Hedge, their Wall of protection, *Isa.* 5. 5. Walls and Hedges (saith *Musculus in loc.*) are the Ordinances of God, which serve both *ad seperationem, & munitionem*, to distinguish, and to defend them. When God plucks up this hedge, and breaks down this Wall, all mischiefs break in upon us presently, 2 *Chron.* 15. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Now for a long season* Israel *hath been without the true God, and without a teaching Preist, and without Law* —— *And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the Countries, and Nation was destroyed of Nation, and City of City; for God did vex them with all adversity.* How long did *Jerusalem* remain, after that voice was heard in the Temple, *migremus hinc?* Let us be gone? (4.) With the Gospel, we lose our Temporal Enjoyments and Creature comforts. These usually come and go with the Gospel. When God had once written *Loammi* upon *Israel*, the next

news is this, *I will recover my Wool and my Flax*, *Hoſ.* 2. 9. (5.) And laſtly, to come up to the very caſe in hand, they loſe with it their Spiritual Food and Soul-ſubſiſtence, for the Goſpel is their *feaſt of fat things*, *Iſa.* 25. 6. their Spiritual *Wells*, *Iſa.* 12. 3. a dole diſtributed among the *Lord's* poor, *Rom.* 1. 11. In a word, it is as the Rain and Dews of Heaven, as hath been ſhewed, which being reſtrained, a Spiritual Famine neceſſarily follows; a Famine of all the moſt terrible. Now to ſhew you the Analogy betwixt this and a Temporal Famine, that therein you may ſee what cauſe you have to be deeply affected with it, take it in theſe ſix following Particulars.

1. A Famine is cauſed by the failing of Bread, or that which is in the ſtead, and hath the uſe *of Bread*. Dainties and ſuperfluous Rarities may fail, and yet Men may ſubſiſt comfortably. As long as people have Bread and Water, they will not famiſh; but take away Bread once, and the Spirit of man faileth. Upon this account Bread is called a Staff, *Pſal.* 105. 16. becauſe what a Staff is to an aged or feeble man, that Bread is to the faint and feeble Spirits, which even ſo do lean upon it. And look what Bread is to the natural Spirits, that, and *more* than that, the Word is to gracious Spirits, *Job* 23. 12. *I have eſteemed the words of thy mouth, more than my neceſſary food.* If once God break this Staff, the inner man, that hidden man of the Heart, will quickly begin to fail and faulter.

2. It is not every degree of ſcarcity of Bread that preſently makes a *Famine*, but a general *failing* of it; when no Bread is to be had, or that which is, yields

yields no nutriment. For a Famine may as well be occaſioned by God's taking away *panis nutrimentum*, the nouriſhing vertue of Bread, that it ſhall ſignifie no more as to the end of Bread, than a Chip, *Hag.* 1. 6. as by taking away *panem nutrientem*, Bread it ſelf, *Iſa.* 3. 1. And ſo it is in a Spiritual Famine, which is occaſioned either by God's removing all the Ordinances, and making Viſion utterly to fail; or elſe, though there be Preaching, Prayer and other Ordinances left, (at leaſt, the names and ſhadows of them) yet the preſence of God is not with them. There is no Marrow in the Bone, no Milk in the Breaſt; and ſo, as to Soul ſubſiſtence, 'tis all one, as if there were no ſuch things.

3. In a Corporeal Famine, mean and courſe things become ſweet and pleaſant; Famine raiſes the price and eſteem of them. That which before you would have thrown to your Dogs, now goes down pleaſantly with your ſelves. To the hungry Soul every bitter thing is ſweet, *Prov.* 27. 7. 'Tis the *Dutch* Proverb, and a very true one, *Hunger is the beſt Book.*

Jejunus ſtomachus raro vulgaria temnit. Horat.

In time of Famine courſeſt fare contents,
The barking ſtomack ſtrains no complements.

'Tis ſtoried of *Artaxerxes Memor*, that when he was flying before his Enemies, he fed hungrily *upon* Barly-Bread, and ſaid, *Cujuſmodi voluptatis hactenus inexpertus fuit?* Oh, what pleaſure have I hitherto

been ignorant of? When great *Darius* drank the puddled Water, that had been defiled with dead Carcaſes, which had been ſlain in that Famous Battel, he profeſſed he never drank more pleaſant Drink. And Famous *Hunniades* ſaid, He never fared more daintily, than when (in a like exigence) he ſupped upon Bread, Onions, and Water with a poor Shepherd in his Cottage.

Juſt ſo doth the Famine of the Word raiſe the price and eſteem of vulgar and deſpiſed Truths. O what would we give for one of thoſe Sermons, one of thoſe Sabbaths we formerly enjoyed? *In thoſe days the Word of the Lord was precious.* When God calls to the Enemy to take away and remove his contemned, but precious Dainties, from his wanton children, and a Spiritual Famine hath a little pinched them, they will then learn to prize their Spiritual Food at a higher rate.

4. In time of Famine ſome Perſons ſuffer more than others. It falls heavieſt and pincheth hardeſt upon the poorer ſort, as long as any thing is to be had for Money, the Rich will have it. So it falls out in a Spiritual Famine; although the moſt experienced and beſt furniſhed Chriſtian will have enough to do to live in the abſence of Ordinances, yet they are like to ſubſiſt much better, than weak, ignorant, and unexperienced ones. Some Chriſtians have husbanded their time well, and like *Joſeph* in the ſeven years *plenty*, laid up for a *ſcarcity*; The Word of God dwells richly in them. Some ſuch there are, as *John* calls young Men, who are ſtrong, and the Word of God remaineth in them, of whom it may be ſaid, as *Jerom* ſpake of *Nepotianus*,

tianus, that by long and aſſiduous meditation of the Scriptures, he had made his Breaſt the very Library of Chriſt. But others are Babes in Chriſt; and though God will preſerve that good work which he hath begun in them, yet thoſe poor Babes will ſooneſt find, and be moſt concerned in the loſs of their Spiritual Fathers and Nurſes.

5. In time of Famine there are pitiful cries, and heart-breaking complaints where-ever you go. O the many pale Faces you ſhall then ſee, and the ſad Language that rings in your Ears in every place! One cries, Bread, Bread, for Chriſt's ſake one bit of Bread; another faints and falls down at your door. *All her people ſigh*, Lam. 1. 11. Yea, the poor little ones are brought in, *v.* 12. crying to their Mothers, where is the Corn and Wine? And then pouring out their Souls into their Mothers Boſom. Juſt ſo it is in a Famine of the Word; poor Chriſtians every-where ſighing and crying, O where are our godly Miniſters? Our ſweet Sabbaths, Sermons, Sacraments, my Fathers, my Fathers, the Chariots of *Iſrael* and the *Horſemen* thereof? How beautiful were your Feet upon the *Mountains!* And then weeping, like the people at *Paul's departure*, to think they ſhall ſee their *faces* no *more*.

6. Laſtly, In time of Famine there is nothing ſo coſtly or precious, but people will part with it to purchaſe Bread. *They have given their pleaſant things for meat to relieve their ſouls*, Lam. 1. 11. And doubtleſs when a Spiritual Famine ſhall pinch hard, thoſe that have been cloſe handed to maintain a Goſpel-miniſtry, will account it a choice Mercy to enjoy them again at any rate. *Though the*

Lord feed you with the bread of affliction, and give you the waters of adversity, yet it will sweeten that bread and water to you, if your teachers be no more removed into corners, Isa. 30. 20.

REFLECTIONS.

The Ungrateful Soul's Reflection.

1. Is the Famine of the Word such a fearful Judgment? Then, Lord, pardon my unthankfulness, for the plentiful and long-continued enjoyment of such a precious and invaluable Mercy. How lightly have I esteem'd the great things of the Gospel? O that with Eyes and Hands lifted up to Heaven, I might bless the Lord, that ever I was brought forth in an Age of so much light, in a Valley of Visions, in a Land flowing with Gospel-mercies! *Hath not God made of one Blood all the Nations of Men, to dwell on the face of the Earth, and determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation?* Acts 17. 26. Many of these great and populous Nations are involv'd in gross darkness. Now that of all the several Ages of the World, and places in it; God should espy the best place for me, and bring me forth into it, in such an happy nick of time, as can hardly be parallel'd in History, for the plenty of Gospel-mercies, that this Age and Nation hath enjoyed; that my Mother did not bring me forth in the Deserts of *Arabia*, or wastes of *America*, but in *England*, where God hath made the Sun of the Gospel to stand still, as the natural Sun once did over *Gibeon*; and that such Mercy should no more affect my Soul, let shame cover my Face for this, and trembling seize my Heart.

2. Is

2. Is the Gospel indeed departed? Its sweet influences restrain'd, and a Famine worse than that of Bread come upon us? *Alas! for the day, for it is a great day, so that none is like it; it is even the day of* Jacob's *trouble.* Woe is me, that even I should survive the Gospel, and the precious Liberties and Mercies of it! What horrid sins have been harbour'd amongst us, for which the *Lord* contends by such an unparallel'd Judgment? Lord, let me justifie thee even in this severe dispensation; the provocation of thy Sons, and of thy Daughters have been very great, and amongst them none greater than mine. May we not this day read our sin in our punishment? O what nice and wanton Appetites, what curious and itching Ears had thy People in the days of plenty? Methods, Tones and Gestures, were more regarded than the excellent Treasures of Divine Truths. Ah my Soul! I remember my fault this day, little did I then consider, that Sermons work not upon Hearts, as they are thus elegant, thus admirable, but as they are Instruments in the Hand of God appointed to such an end. Even as *Austin* said of the Conduits of Water, tho' one be in the shape of an Angel, another of a Beast, yet the Water refreshes as it is Water, and not as it comes from such a Conduit: By this also, O Lord, thou rebukest the supineness and formality of thy People. How drowsie, dull, and careless have they been under the most excellent and quickning means? Few more than I. Alas! I have often presented my Body before the Lord in Ordinances, ἀ ὃ ψυχὴ ἐξῶ; but my Soul

The Deprived Christian's Reflection.

hath been wandring abroad, as *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks. I ſhould have come from under every *Sermon*, as a ſheet comes from the *Preſs*, with all the ſtamps and lively impreſſions of the *Truths* I heard upon my Heart. But alas, if it had been demanded of me, as once it was of *Ariſtotle*, after a long and curious Oration, how he liked it, I might have anſwered as he did, truly I did not hear it; for I was all the while minding another matter. Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all that is come upon us.

The Silent Miniſter's Reflection.

3. I am now as a Spring ſhut up, that can yield no refreſhment to thirſty Souls ready to periſh. Thou haſt ſaid to me as once to *Ezekiel*. *Son of Man, behold, I will make thy Tongue cleave to the roof of thy Mouth, and thou ſhalt be dumb.* This is a heavy Judgment, but thou muſt be juſtified and cleared in it. Altho' Men may not, yet God, if he pleaſe, may put a lighted Candle under a Buſhel. And herein I muſt acknowledge thy Righteouſneſs. Many times have I been ſinfully ſilent, when both thy Glory and the intereſt of Souls ingaged me to ſpeak. Moſt juſtly therefore haſt thou made my Tongue to cleave to its Roof. Little did I conſider the preciouſneſs of Souls, or the tremendous Account to be given for them, at the appearing of the great *Shepherd*. I have now time enough to ſit down and mourn over former miſcarriages, and loſt opportunities. Lord, reſtore me once again to a ſerviceable Capacity, to a larger Sphere of Activity for thee, for I am now become as a broken Veſſel. It grieves me to the Heart, to ſee thy Flock ſcattered, to hear thy People cry to me,

me, as once to *Joſeph*, *Give us bread, for why ſhould we die in thy preſence?* Thy Word is like Fire ſhut up in my Bones, and I am weary with forbearing. O, that thou wouldſt once again open the Doors of thine Houſe, that there may be Bread enough in thine Houſe for all thy Children.

The POEM.

WHen God doth make the Heavens above us Braſs,
The Earth's like Iron; Flowers, Herbs and Graſs
Have loſt their fragrant green, are turned yellow,
The Brooks are dry, the pining Cattel bellow.
The Fat and Flowry Meadows ſcorch'd and burn'd,
The Countreys mirth is into mourning turn'd.
The clefted Earth, her thirſty mouth ſets ope
Unto the empty Clouds; as 'twere in hope
Of ſome refreſhing drops, that might allay
Her fiery thirſt; but they ſoon paſs away.
The penſive Husbandman with his own Eyes
Bedews his Land; becauſe he ſees the Skies
Refuſe to do it; juſt ſo ſtands the Caſe,
When God from Souls removes the means of Grace.
God's Miniſters are Clouds, their Doctrine Rain;
Which when the Lord in Judgment ſhall reſtrain,
The Peoples Souls in ſhort time will be found
In ſuch a caſe, as this dry parched ground.
When this ſad Judgment falls on any Nation,
Let Saints therein take up the Lamentation.
O dreadful, dark, and diſmal Day!
How is our glory fled away?
Our Sun gone down, our Stars o're-caſt;
God's Heritage is now laid waſte.

Our pining Souls no Bread can get,
With Wantons God hath juſtly met.
When we were fed unto the full,
This Man was tedious, that was dull.
But they are gone, and there remain
No ſuch occaſion to complain.
Stars are not now for Lights, but Signs,
God knows of what, heart-breaking Times.
Sure Heaven intends not Peace, but Wars,
In calling home Ambaſſadors.
How long did Sodom's *Judgment ſtay,*
When righteous Lot *was ſnatcht away?*
How long remain'd that ſtately Hall,
When Sampſon *made the Pillars fall?*
When Horſemen and Commanders fly,
Woe to the helpleſs Infantry.
This is a ſad and fatal blow,
A publick loſs and overthrow.
You that ſo long have wiſh'd them gone,
Be quiet now, the thing is done.
Did they torment you ere your day?
God hath remov'd them out o'th' way.
Now ſleep in Sin, and take your eaſe;
Their Doctrine ſhall no more diſpleaſe.
But Lord! What ſhall become of us?
Our Teacher's gone, and left us thus;
To whom ſhall we our ſelves addreſs,
When Conſcience labours in diſtreſs?
O, who ſhall help us at our need?
Or pour in Balm when wounds do bleed?
Help Lord, for unto thee our Eyes
Do pour out Tears; our Groans, our Cries
Shall never ceaſe, till thou reſtore
The Mercies which we had before.

Till Sion's *paths where Graſs now grows,*
Be trodden by the Feet of thoſe
That love thy Name, and long t' enjoy
The Mercies they have ſinn'd away.

CHAP. XI.

Upon the Corrupting of the Seed before it Spring.

Seeds die and rot, and then moſt freſh appear,
Saints Bodies riſe more Orient than they were.

OBSERVATION.

AFter the Seed is committed to the Earth, it ſeems to *periſh* and *die*, as our *Saviour* ſpeaks, *John* 12. 24. *Except a Corn of Wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.* The death of the Corn in the Earth is not a total death, but only the corruption or alteration of it: For if once the ſeminal Life and Vertue of it were quite extinguiſht, it could never put forth blade or ear without a Miracle. Yet, becauſe that alteration is a kind of death, therefore Chriſt here uſes it as a fit Illuſtration of the Reſurrection. And indeed there is nothing in nature more apt to illuſtrate that great Myſtery. What a fragrant, green and beautiful blade do we ſee ſpring up from a corrupted Seed? How black, and mouldy is that? How beautiful, and verdant is this?

APPLICATION.

EVen thus ſhall the Bodies of the Saints ariſe in beauty and glory at the Reſurrection. *They are ſown in diſhonour, they are raiſed in glory, they are ſown natural bodies, they are raiſed ſpiritual bodies*, 1 Cor. 15. 43, 44. The Husbandman knows, that though the Seed rot in the Earth, yet it will riſe again. And the Believer knows, *That though after his skin worms deſtroy his body, yet in his fleſh he ſhall ſee God*, Job 19. 25, &c. And the reſemblance betwixt the Seed ſown, and ſpringing up; and the Bodies of the Saints dying, and riſing again, lyes in theſe following Particulars.

1. The Seed is committed to the Earth from whence it came, ſo is the body of a Saint; Earth it was, and to Earth it is again reſolved. Grace exempts not the Body of the beſt Man from ſeeing Corruption, *Rom.* 8. 10. Though Chriſt be in him, yet the Body is dead; that is, ſentenced to death, becauſe of ſin, *Heb.* 9. *ult. It is appointed for all men once to die.*

2. The Seed is caſt into the Earth in hope, 1 *Cor.* 9. 10. Were there not a Reſurrection of it expected, the Husbandman would never be willing to caſt away his Corn. The Bodies of Saints are alſo committed to the Grave in hope, 1 *Theſ* 4. 13, 14. *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning thoſe which are aſleep, as them which have no hope; for if we believe that Jeſus died and roſe again, even ſo alſo them which ſleep in Jeſus, ſhall the Lord bring with him.* This bleſſed hope of a Reſurrection, ſweetens not only the troubles of Life, but the pangs of Death.

3. The

3. The Seed is caſt into the Earth ſeaſonably, in its proper Seaſon. So are the Bodies of the Saints, Job 5. 26. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, as a ſhock of Corn cometh in, in its ſeaſon.* They always die in the fitteſt time, tho' ſometimes they ſeem to die immaturely. The time of their Death was from all Eternity prefixt by God, beyond which they cannot go, and ſhort of which they cannot come.

4. The Seed lyes many days and nights under the Clods, before it riſe and appear again. *Even ſo man lyeth down, and riſeth not again till the Heavens be no more*, Job 14. 12. The days of darkneſs in the Grave are many.

5. When the time is come for its ſhooting up, the Earth that covered it can hide it no longer, it cannot keep it down a day more; it will find or make way through the Clods. So in the day when the great Trump ſhall ſound, Bone ſhall come to his Bone, and the Graves ſhall not be able to hold them a minute longer. Both Sea and Earth muſt render the dead that are in them, *Rev.* 20. 30.

6. When the Seed appears above-ground again, it appears much more freſh and orient then when it was caſt into the Earth: God cloaths it with ſuch Beauty, that it is not like to what it was before. Thus riſe the Bodies of Saints, marvellouſly improved, beautified, and perfected with Spiritual Qualities and Rich Endowments; in reſpect whereof they are call'd Spiritual-Bodies, 1 *Cor.* 15. 43. not properly, but Analogically Spiritual; for look as Spirits ſubſiſt without Food, Raiment, Sleep,

know

know no laſſitude, wearineſs or pain; ſo our Bodies after the *Reſurrection* ſhall be above theſe Neceſſities and Diſtempers; for we ſhall be as the Angels of God, *Mat.* 22. 30. Yea, our vile Bodies ſhall be changed, and made like unto Chriſt's glorious Body; which is the higheſt pitch, and aſcent of Glory and Honour, that an human Body is capable of, *Phil.* 3. 21. Indeed the glory of the Soul ſhall be the greateſt glory; that's the Orient invaluable Jem; but God will beſtow a diſtinct glory upon the Body, and richly Enamel the very Caſe in which that precious Jewel ſhall be kept. In that glorious Morning of the Reſurrection, the Saints ſhall put on their new freſh Suits of Fleſh, richly laid and trimmed with *Glory*. Thoſe Bodies which in the *Grave* were but duſt and rottenneſs, when it delivers them back again, ſhall be ſhining and excellent pieces, abſolutely and everlaſtingly freed, (1.) From all natural Infirmities and Diſtempers; Death is their good Phyſician, which at once freed them of all Diſeaſes. 'Tis a great affliction now to many of the Lord's people, to be clog'd with ſo many bodily Infirmities which render them very unſerviceable to God. *The ſpirit indeed is willing, but the fleſh is weak.* A crazy Body retorts and ſhoots back its Diſtempers upon the Soul, with which it is ſo cloſely conjoined; but though now the Soul (as *Theophraſtus* ſpeaks) pays a dear rent for the *Tabernacle* in which it dwells, yet when Death diſſolves that Tabernacle, all the Diſeaſes and Pains under which it groaned ſhall be buried in the Rubbiſh of its Mortality; and when they come to be reunited again, God will beſtow rich Gifts and Dowries, even

even upon the Body, in the day of its Re-eſpouſals to the Soul. (2.) It ſhall be freed from all deformities, there are no breaches, flaws, monſtroſities, in glorified Bodies; but of them it may much rather be ſaid what was once ſaid of *Abſolom*, 2 Sam. 14. 25. *That from the Crown of his head, to the ſole of his Foot, there was no blemiſh in him.* (3.) It ſhall be freed from all natural Neceſſities, to which it is now ſubjected in this its Animal ſtate. How is the Soul now diſquieted and tortured with cares and troubles, to provide for a periſhing Body? Many unbelieving and unbecoming fears, it is now vexed with. What ſhall it eat? And what ſhall it drink? And wherewithal ſhall it be cloathed? *But meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; God ſhall deſtroy both it and them*, 1 Cor. 6. 13. (*i. e.*) as to their preſent uſe and office; for as to its exiſtence, ſo the Belly ſhall not be deſtroyed. But even as the Maſts, Poop and Stern of a Ship abide in the Harbour after the Voyage is ended, ſo ſhall theſe bodily *Members*, as *Tertullian* excellently illuſtrates it. (4.) They ſhall be freed from Death, to which thenceforth they can be ſubject no more; that formidable Adverſary of nature ſhall aſſault it no more. *For they which ſhall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the reſurrection from the dead; neither marry, nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more; for they ſhall be equal to the Angels, and are the Children of God, being the Children of the Reſurrection*, Luke 20. 35, 36. Mark it (equal to the Angels) not that they ſhall be ſeperate,

and

Ἰσαγγελῶς βίους. and single Spirits without Bodies, as the Angels are, but equal to them in the way and manner of their living and acting. We shall then live upon God, and act freely, purely, and delightfully for God; for all kind of living upon, and delighting in Creatures, seems in that Text (by a Synecdoche of the part, which is ordinarily in Scripture put for all Creature-delights, Dependencies, and Necessities) to be excluded. Nothing but God shall enamour and fill the Soul, and the Body shall be perfectly subdued to the Spirit. Lord! what hast thou prepared for them that Love thee?

REFLECTIONS.

The Healthful Saint's Reflection. 1. If I shall receive my Body again so dignified and improved in the World to come, then, Lord, let me never be unwilling to use my Body now for the Interest of thy Glory, or my own Salvation. Now, O my God, it grieves me to think how many precious opportunities of serving and honouring thee, I have lost under pretence of endangering my Health.

I have been more solicitous to live long and healthfully, than to live usefully and fruitfully; and like enough my Life had been more serviceable to thee, if it had not been so fondly over-valued by me.

Foolish Soul, hath God given thee a Body for a living Tool or Instrument, and art thou afraid to use it? Wherein is the Mercy of having a Body, if not in spending and wearing it out in the *Service* of God?

God? To have an active vigorous Body, and not to imploy and exerciſe it for God, for fear of endangering its Health, is, as if one ſhould give thee a handſome and ſprightful Horſe, upon condition thou ſhouldſt not ride or work him. If ſome of the Saints had enjoyed the bleſſings of ſuch an healthy active Body as mine, what excellent Services would they have performed to God in it?

The Sickly Saint's Reflection.

2. If my Body ſhall as ſurely riſe again in glory, vigour and excellent endowments, as the Seed which I ſow doth, Why ſhould not this comfort me over all the pains, weakneſſes and dulneſs with which my Soul is now clogged? Thou knoweſt, my God, what a Grief it hath been to my Soul, to be fetter'd and intangl'd with the Diſtempers and manifold Indiſpoſitions of this vile Body. It hath made me ſigh and ſay, with holy *Anſelme*, when he ſaw the mounting Bird weighed down by the Stone hanging at her Leg: Lord, thus it fares with the Soul of thy Servant. Fain would I ſerve, glorifie, and enjoy thee, but a diſtempered Body will not let me. However, it is reviving to think, that tho' I am now forced to crawl like a worm, in the diſcharge of my Duties, I ſhall ſhortly fly, like a Seraphim, in the execution of thy Will. Chear up, drooping Soul, the time is at hand, when thou ſhalt be made more willing than thou art, and thy Fleſh not ſo weak as now it is.

The Dying Saint's Reflection.

3. And is it ſo indeed? Then let the dying Saint, like *Jacob*, rouze up himſelf upon his Bed, and incourage himſelf againſt the fears of death by

this

this refreshing Consideration. Let him say with holy dying *Musculus*, Why trembleſt thou (O my Soul) to go forth of this Tabernacle to the Land of Reſt? Hath thy Body been ſuch a pleaſant Habitation to thee, that thou ſhould'd be ſo loth to part with it, tho' but for a time? And with aſſurance of receiving it again with ſuch a glorious improvement? I know (O my Soul) that thou haſt a natural inclination to this Body, reſulting from the dear and ſtrict union which God himſelf hath made betwixt thee and it! Yea, even the holieſt of men do ſometimes ſenſibly feel the like in themſelves but beware thou love it not immoderately or inordinately; 'tis but a Creature, how dear ſoever it be to thee: Yea, a fading Creature, and that which now ſtands in thy way to the full enjoyment of God. But ſay my Soul, Why are the thoughts of parting with it ſo burdenſome to thee? Why ſo loth to take Death by its cold Hand? Is this Body thy old and dear Friend? True, but yet thou parteſt not with it upon ſuch ſad terms, as ſhould deſerve a Tear at parting. For mayſt thou not ſay of this departure, as *Paul* at the departure of *Oneſimus*, Philem. v. 15. *It therefore departeth for a ſeaſon, that thou mayſt receive it for ever.* The day of Re-eſpouſals will quickly come, and in the mean time as thy Body ſhall not be ſenſible of the tedious length of interpoſing time, ſo neither ſhalt thou be ſolicitous about thine abſent Friend: For the Fruition of God in that thine unbodied ſtate, ſhall fill thee with infinite Satisfaction and Reſt.

Or is it not ſo much ſimply for parting with it, as for the manner of thy parting, either by the ſlow

and

and lingring approaches of a natural, or the quick and terrible approaches of a violent Death? Why, trouble not thy self about that; for if God lead thee thro' the long dark Lane of a tedious Sickness, yet at the end of it is thy Father's House. And for a violent Death 'tis not so material, whether Friends or Enemies stand weeping or triumphing over thy dead Body. *Nihil corpus sentit in nervo cum anima sit in cœlo.* When thy Soul shall be in Heaven, 'twill not be sensible how the Body is used on Earth.

The ungodly Soul's Reflection.

4. But Oh! What an uncomfortable parting will mine be? And how much more sad our meeting again! How will this Soul and Body blush, yea tremble, when they meet, who have been Co-partners in so much guilt! I Damn'd my Soul, to please my Flesh, and now have ruin'd both thereby: Had I denied my Flesh to serve Christ, worn out my Body in the Service of my Soul, I had thereby happily provided for them both, but I began at the wrong end, and so have ruin'd both eternally.

The POEM.

BARE Seeds have no great beauty, but inhum'd
That which they had is lost, and quite consum'd:
They soon corrupt, and grow more base by odds
When dead, and bury'd underneath the clods.
It falls in baseness, but at length doth rise
In glory; which delights beholders Eyes.
How great a difference have a few days made
Betwixt it, in the Bushel, and the blade!

This

This lovely, lively emblem aptly may
Type out the glorious Reſurrection day;
Wherein the Saints that in the duſt do lye,
Shall riſe in Glory, Vigour, Dignity.
With Singing in that morning they ariſe,
And dazling Glory; ſuch as mortal Eyes
Ne'er view'd on Earth. The ſparkling Beauties here,
No more can equalize their Splendor there,
Than glimmer Glow-worms do the faireſt Star
That ſhines in Heaven, or the Stones that are
In every Street, *may competition hold*
With glittering Diamonds in Rings of Gold.
For unto Chriſt's moſt glorious Body they
Shall be conform'd in Glory at that day;
Whoſe luſtre would, ſhould it on Mortals fall,
Tranſport a Stephen, *and confound a* Paul.
'Tis now a courſe and crazy Houſe of Clay;
But O! How dear do Souls for Lodging pay!
Few more than I, for thou, my Soul, haſt been
Within theſe Tents of Kedar *cooped in.*
Where, with Diſtempers clog'd, thou mak'ſt thy Moans,
And, for Deliverance, with tears and groans
Haſt often ſu'd; Cheer up, the time will be,
When thou from all theſe Troubles ſhalt be free.
No jarring Humours, cloudy Vapours, Rheums,
Pains, Aches, or whatever elſe conſumes
My days in Grief; whilſt in the Chriſtian Race,
Fleſh lags behind, and can't keep equal pace
With the more equal Spirit; none of theſe
Shall thenceforth clog thee, or diſturb thine eaſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Upon the Reſemblance of Wheat and Tares.

As Wheat reſembled is by viler Tares,
So vile Hypocriſie like Grace appears.

OBSERVATION.

IT is *Jerom's* Obſervation, that Wheat and *Tares* are ſo much alike in their firſt ſpringing up, that it is exceeding difficult to diſtinguiſh the one from the other, Theſe are his words, *Inter triticum & lolium quamdiu herba eſt, & nondum culmus venit ad ſpicam; grandis ſimilitudo eſt: & indiſcernendo aut nulla, aut perdifficilis diſtantia.* The difference (ſaith he) between them, is either none at all, or wonderful difficult to diſcern; which thoſe words of Chriſt, *Mat.* 13. 30. plainly confirm: Let them both alone till the Harveſt; thereby intimating, both the difficulty of diſtinguiſhing the *Tares* and Wheat; as alſo, the unwarrantable raſhneſs of bold and haſty Cenſures of Mens Sincerity or Hypocriſie, which is there ſhadowed by them.

APPLICATION.

HOw difficult ſoever it be to diſcern the difference betwixt Wheat and Tares; yet doubtleſs the Eye of Sence can much eaſier diſcriminate them, than the moſt quick and piercing Eye of Man can diſcern the difference betwixt ſpecial and common Grace; for all ſaving Graces in the Saints have

have their Counterfeits in Hypocrites. There are *ſimilar works* in theſe, which a Spiritual and very Judicious Eye may eaſily miſtake for the *ſaving and genuine effects* of the Sanctifying Spirit.

Doth the Spirit of God convince the Conſciences of his people of the evil of Sin? *Rom.* 7. 9. Hypocrites have their Convictions too, *Exod.* 10. 16. *Then* Pharaoh *called for* Moſes *and* Aaron *in haſte, and he ſaid, I have ſinned againſt the Lord your God, and againſt you.* Thus was *Saul* alſo convicted, 1 *Sam.* 15. 24.

Doth true Conviction and Compunction work Reformation of Life in the people of God? Even Hypocrites alſo have been famous for their Reformations. The unclean Spirit often goes out of the formal Hypocrite, by an external Reformation; and yet ſtill retains his propriety in them, *Mat.* 12. 43, 44. For that departure is indeed no more than a politick retreat. Many that ſhall never eſcape the Damnation of Hell, have yet eſcaped the Pollutions of the World, and that by the knowledge of the Son of God, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20.

Doth the Spirit of the Lord produce that glorious and ſupernatural work of Faith in convinced and humble Souls? In this alſo the Hypocrite apes and imitates the Believer, *Acts* 8. 13. *Then* Simon *himſelf believed alſo*, Luke 8. 13. *Theſe are they which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.*

Doth the precious Eye of Faith, diſcovering the tranſcendent excellencies that are in *Chriſt*, inflame the Affections of the believing Soul with *vehement* deſires and longings after him? Strange motions

of

of Heart have alſo been found in Hypocrites towards Chriſt and heavenly things, Joh 6. 34 *Lord, evermore give us this bread*, *Mat.* 25. 8. *Give us of your Oyl, for our Lamps are gone out.* With what a Rapture was *Bálaam* tranſported, when he ſaid, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and my laſt end be like his*, Numb. 23. 10.

Doth the work of Faith in ſome Believers bear upon its top Branches, the full ripe Fruits of a bleſſed aſſurance? Lo! What ſtrong confidences, and high-built perſwaſions of an intereſt in God, have ſometimes been found even in unſanctified ones? John 8. 54. *Of whom you ſay, that he is your God, and yet ye have not known him.* To the ſame height of confidence arrived thoſe vain Souls, mention'd in *Rom.* 2. 19. Yea, ſo ſtrong may this falſe aſſurance be, that they dare boldly venture to go to the Judgment-ſeat of God, and there defend it, Mat. 7. 22. *Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name?*

Doth the *Spirit* of *God* fill the Heart of the aſſured *Believer* with joy unſpeakable and full of *glory*, giving them, *through Faith*, a *prelibation*, or foretaſt of Heaven it ſelf, in thoſe firſt-fruits of it? How near to this comes that which the *Apoſtle* ſuppoſes may be found even in *Apoſtates*! Heb. 6. 8. 9. who there ſaid, *to taſte the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.* What ſhall I ſay? If real Chriſtians delight in Ordinances, thoſe that are none may alſo delight in approaching to God, Ezek. 33. 32. It may be you will ſay, though the difference be not eaſily diſcernable in their active obedience; yet, when it ſhall come to ſuffering,

there

there every Eye may discern it: The false Heart will then flinch, and cannot brook that work. And yet even this is no infallible rule neither; for the Apostle supposes, that the *Salamander* of *Hypocrisie* may live in the very Flames of Martyrdom, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. *If I give my body to be burnt, and have not charity.* And it was long since determined in this case, *Non pœna, sed causa facit Martyrem*; so that without Controversie, the difficulty of distinguishing them is very great.

And this difference will yet be more subtil and undiscernable, if I should tell you, that as in so many things, the Hypocrite resembles the Saint: So there are others things in which a real Christian may act too like a Hypocrite. When we find a *Pharaoh* confessing, an Herod practising, as well as hearing, a *Judas* preaching Christ, an *Alexander* venturing his Life for *Paul*; and on the other side, shall find a *David* condemning that in another, which he practised himself; and *Hezekiah* glorying in his Riches, a *Peter* dissembling, and even all the Disciples forsaking *Christ* in an hour of trouble and danger. O then! how hard is it for the Eye of Man to discern betwixt Chaff and Wheat? How many upright Hearts are now censured, whom God will clear? How many false Hearts are now approved, whom God will condemn? Men ordinarily have no clear convictive proofs, but only probable symptoms, which at most can beget but a conjectural knowledge of another's state. And they that shall peremptorily judge either way, may possibly *wrong* the Generation of the upright; or on the other side, absolve and justifie the Wicked. And truly,

consider-

conſidering what hath been ſaid, it's no great wonder that dangerous *miſtakes* are ſo frequently made in this matter. But though man cannot, the Lord both can, and will perfectly diſcriminate them. *The Lord knoweth who are his*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. He will have a day perfectly to ſever the Tares from the Wheat, to melt off the varniſh of the moſt reſplendent and refined Hypocrite, and to blow off the Aſhes of Infirmities, which have covered and obſcured the very ſparks of ſincerity in his People. He will make ſuch a diviſion as was never yet made in the World, how many Diviſions ſoever there have been in it. *And then ſhall men indeed return, and diſcern betwixt the righteous and the wicked, betwixt him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not.* Mean while (my Soul) thou canſt not better imploy thy ſelf, whether thou be ſound or unſound, than in making theſe Reflections upon thy ſelf.

REFLECTIONS.

The Cenſorious Soul's Reflection.

And is this ſo? Then, *Lord*, pardon the raſhneſs and precipitancy of my Cenſorious Spirit; for I have often boldly anticipated thy Judgment, and aſſumed thy Prerogative, although thou haſt ſaid, *Why doſt thou judge thy brother? And why doſt thou ſet at nought thy brother? We ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt; for it is written, as I live (ſaith the Lord) every knee ſhall bow to me, and every tongue ſhall confeſs to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more*, Rom. 14. 10, 11, 12, 13. And again, *He that judgeth me is the Lord.*

Let us therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the counſels of the heart; and then ſhall every man have praiſe of God, 1 Cor. 4. 4. 5.

What if *God* will own ſome of them for his *Sons*, to whom I refuſe to give the reſpect of Brethren? I may paſs haſty and headlong *Cenſures* upon others, but where is my Commiſſion for ſo doing? I want not only a Commiſſion, but fit Qualifications for ſuch a work as this. Can I pierce into the Heart as God? Can I infallibly diſcover the hidden motives, ends and principles of actions? Beſides, O my Soul! Thou art conſcious of ſo much falſeneſs in thy ſelf, that were there no other Conſideration, that alone might reſtrain thee from all uncharitable and haſty Cenſures. If others knew but what I know of my ſelf, would they not judge as ſeverely of me, as I do of others?

The Preſumptuous Soul's Reflection.

2. Though I may not judge the final ſtate of another, yet I may and ought to judge the ſtate of my own Soul; which is doubtleſs a more neceſſary and concerning work to me. For ſince every Saving *Grace* in a Chriſtian hath its Counterfeit in the Hypocrite, how needful is it, for thee, (O my Soul) to make a ſtand here, and ſolemnly to ponder this great queſtion; Whether thoſe things whereon I depend as my beſt *evidences* for the *Life* to come, be the real, or only the common works of the Spirit? Whether they be ſuch as can now endure the Teſt of the Word and abide a fair Tryal at the Bar of my own Conſcience?

Come

Come then, my Soul! Set the Lord before thee to whom the ſecrets of all Hearts are manifeſt; and in the awful ſence of that great day, make true anſwer to theſe Heart-diſcovering Queries; for though thou canſt not diſcern the difference betwixt theſe things in another, yet thou mayſt and oughteſt to diſcern it in thy ſelf; for what Man knows the things of a Man, ſave the Spirit of Man that is in him?

Firſt, Is my obedience uniform? Am I the ſame Man at all Times, Places and Companies? Or rather, am I not exact and curious in open and publick; remiſs and careleſs, in private and ſecret Duties? Sincere Souls are uniform Souls, *Pſal.* 119. 6. the Hypocrite is no Cloſet-man, *Mat.* 6. 5.

Secondly, Doth that which I call Grace in me, oppoſe and mortifie, or doth it not rather quietly conſiſt with, and protect my Luſts and Corruptions? True Grace tolerates no Luſt, *Gal.* 5. 17. No, not the Boſom, Darling-corruptions, *Pſal.* 18. 23.

Thirdly, Doth that which I call my Grace, humble, empty, and abaſe my Soul? Or rather, doth it not puff it up with Self-conceitedneſs? All ſaving Grace is humbling Grace, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *But the Soul which is lifted up, is not upright.* Hab 2. 4.

Laſtly, Canſt thou (my Soul) rejoyce and bleſs God for the Grace imparted to others? And rejoyce, if any deſign for *Chriſt* be carried on in the World by other hands? Or rather, doſt thou not envy thoſe that excel thee, and careſt for no work in which thon art not ſeen?

But ſtay my Soul, it is enough: If theſe be the

ſubſtantial *differences* betwixt ſpecial and common Grace, I more than doubt, I ſhall not endure the day of his coming, *Whoſe fan is in his hand.* Do not thoſe ſpots appear upon me, which are not the ſpots of his Children? Woe is me, poor Wretch, the Characters of Death are upon my Soul! Lord, add Power to the Form, Life to the Name to Live, Practice to the Knowledge, or I periſh Eternally! O rather give me the *Saint's Heart*, than the *Angel's Tongue*; the pooreſt breathing of thy Spirit, than the richeſt Ornaments of common Gifts! Let me neither deceive my ſelf or others, in matters of ſo deep and everlaſting Conſequence!

The POEM.

IN Eaſtern Countreys, as good Authors write,
Tares in their ſpringing up appear to ſight;
Not like it ſelf, a Weed, but real Wheat,
Whoſe ſhape and form it counterfeits ſo neat,
That 'twould require a moſt judicious Eye,
The one from t'other to diverſifie;
Till both to ſome maturity be grown,
And then the difference is eas'ly known.
Even thus Hypocriſie, that curſed Weed,
Springs up ſo like true Grace, that he will need
More than a common inſight in this Caſe,
That ſaith this is not, that is real Grace.
Ne're did the cunning Actor, though a Slave
Array'd in Princely Robes, himſelf behave
So like a King, as this doth act the part
Of ſaving Grace, by its deep helliſh Art.
Do gracious Souls melt, mourn and weep for ſin?
The like in Hypocrites obſerv'd hath been.

Have

Have they their comforts, joys, and raptures ſweet?
With them in comforts Hypocrites do meet.
In all Religious Duties, they can go
As far as Saints; in ſome things farther too.
They ſpeak like Angels, and you'll think within
The very Spirit of Chriſt, and Grace hath bin.
They come ſo near, that ſome, like Iſaac, *take*
Jacob *for* Eſau; *this for that miſtake.*
And boldly call (their Eyes with his being dim)
True Grace Hypocriſie, and Duty Sin.
Tea, many alſo, Jacob *like, imbrace*
Leah *for* Rachel, *common Gifts for Grace.*
And in their Boſoms hug it, till the light
Diſcover their miſtake, and clear their ſight.
And then like him, confounded they will cry,
Alas! 'tis Leah, *curs'd Hypocriſie!*
Guide me, my God, that I may not inſtead
Of ſaving Grace, nurſe up this curſed Weed.
O let my Heart by thee at laſt be found
Sincere, and all thy workings on it ſound

CHAP. XIII.

Upon the Dangers incident to Corn from Seed-time to Harveſt.

Fowls, Weeds, and Blaſtings do your Corn annoy;
Even ſo Corruptions would your Grace deſtroy.

OBSERVATION.

THere are (*amongſt many others*) three Critical and dangerous periods betwixt the *Seed time* and Harveſt. The firſt, when Corn is newly com-

mitted to the Earth, all that lyes uncovered is quickly pickt up by the Birds; and much of that which is but ſlightly covered, is ſtockt up as ſoon as it begins to ſprout, by Rooks and other devouring Fowls, *Mat.* 13. 4. but if it eſcape the Fowls, and gets root in the Earth, yet then it is hazarded by noxious Weeds, which purloin and ſuck away its *nouriſhment* whilſt it is yet in the tender blade. If by the care of the vigilant Husbandman it be freed from choaking Weeds, yet laſtly, as great a danger as any of the former ſtill attends it; for oftentimes, whilſt it is blowing in the ear, blaſtings, and mildews ſmite it in the ſtalk, which cuts off the juice and ſap that ſhould aſcend to nouriſh the ear; and ſo ſhrivels and dries up the Grain whilſt it is yet immature, whereby it becomes like thoſe ears of Corn in *Pharaoh*'s Viſion, which were thin, and blaſted with the Eaſt-wind; or like the ears the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks of upon the Houſe-top, wherewith the Reaper filleth not his Arms.

APPLICATION.

TRUE Grace from the Infancy to the Perfection thereof, conflicts with far more greater dangers, amongſt which it anſwerably meets with three dangerous periods which marvelouſly hazard it: So that it is a much greater wonder that it ever arrives at its juſt perfection. For, (1.) No ſooner hath the great Husbandman diſſeminated theſe holy Seeds in the regenerate Heart, but multitudes of impetuous Corruptions immediately aſſault, and would certainly devour them like the Fowls of the Air, did not the ſame Arm that ſowed them, alſo protect

protect them. It fares with Grace, as with *Christ* its Author, whom *Herod* ſought to deſtroy in his very Infancy. The new Creature is ſcarce warm in its ſeat, before it muſt fight to defend it ſelf. This Conflict is excellently ſet forth in that famous Text, *Gal.* 5. 17. *The Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other; ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

By *Fleſh* here, underſtand the corruption of nature by Original Sin, and the ſinful motions thereof; by *Spirit*, not the Soul, or natural Spirit of man, but the Spirit of God in man, *viz.* thoſe Graces in man which are the Workmanſhip of the Spirit, and therefore called by his Name. The oppoſition betwixt theſe two is expreſſed by luſting, (*i. e.*) deſiring the mutual ruin and deſtruction of each other; for even when they are not acting, yet then they are luſting, there is an oppoſite diſpoſition againſt each other; which oppoſition is both *formal* and an *effective* oppoſition. There are two contrary forms, two men in every Saint, *Col.* 3. 9, 10. From hence an effective oppoſition muſt needs follow; for as things are in their Natures and Principles, ſo they are in their Operations and Effects; Workings always follow Beings; Fire and *Water* are of contrary qualities, and when they meet, they effectively oppoſe each other. Sin and Grace are ſo oppoſite, that if Sin ſhould ceaſe to oppoſe Grace, it would ceaſe to be Sin; and if Grace ſhould not oppoſe Sin, it would ceaſe to be Grace. And this doth much more endanger the work of Grace, than any other Enemy it hath;

becauſe it works againſt it more *inwardly conſtantly*, and *advantagiouſly*, than any thing elſe can do. (1.) More *inwardly*, for it hath its being and working in the ſame *Soul* where *Grace* dwells; yea, in the ſelf-ſame Faculties, ſo that it not only ſets one Faculty againſt another, but the ſame Faculty againſt it ſelf, the Underſtanding againſt the Underſtanding, and the Will againſt the Will; ſo that ye cannot do the good, nor yet the evil that ye would; not the good that ye would, becauſe when the Spirit moves to good, and beats upon the Heart by Divine Pulſations, exciting it to Duty, the Fleſh croſſes and oppoſes it there; and if it cannot totally hinder the performance of a Duty, yet it lames the Soul upon the working hand, whereby the performance is not ſo Spiritual, free and compoſed, as it deſires; nor yet the evil that you would commit, if Grace were not there, becauſe when Luſt ſtirs in its firſt Motions, Grace puts a rub in its way. *How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* Gen. 39. 9. And if it cannot (which for the moſt part it doth) hinder the acting of ſin, yet it ſo engages the Will againſt it, that it is not committed with complacency and full conſent, Rom. 7. 15. *What I do I allow not.* (2.) It oppoſes it more *conſtantly*, it's like a continual dropping; a Man can no more fly from this Enemy, than from himſelf. There is a time when the Devil leaves tempting, *Mat.* 4. 11. but no time when *Corruption* ceaſes from working. And laſtly, it oppoſes Grace more *advantagiouſly* than any other Enemy can do, for it is not only always in the ſame Soul with it, but it is there naturally; it

hath

hath the advantage of the Soyl which suits with it. And yet, Oh the wonder of free Grace! It is not swallowed up in Victory, it escapes this hazard.

But (2.) It soon meets with another, though it escape this, even with Temptations which strike desperately at the very Life of it; for these, like the Weeds, with seemingly loving Embraces, clasp about it; and did not the faithful God now make a way to escape, instead of an Harvest, we should have an heap; For alas! what are we, to wrestle with Principalities and Powers, and Spiritual Wickednesses in high places?

Lastly, Sad Relapses, like blasts and rustings, do often fade, and greatly endanger it when it's even ready for the Harvest. Thus it fell out with *David*, whose last ways were not like his first; and yet by this, these holy Fruits are not utterly destroyed, because it is the Seed of God, and so is Immortal, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, 5. And also because the Promises of Perseverence and Victory made to it, cannot be frustrated; amongst which these are excellent, *Isa.* 54. 10. *Jer.* 34. 40. 1 *Cor.* 1. 8. *Psa.* 1. 3. *Psa.* 125. 1 *Joh.* 4. 14. So that here is matter of unspeakable Comfort; though the Flesh say, *Ego deficiam*, I will fail thee; though the World say, *Ego decipiam*, I will deceive thee; though the Devil say, *Ego eripiam*, I will snatch thee away; yet as long as *Christ* saith, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee; thy Graces are secure in the midst of all these Enemies.

REFLECTIONS.

The Apostate's Reflection.

1. This Soul of mine was once plowed up by Conviction, and sown (as I thought) with the Seed of God. In those days many purposes and good resolutions began to chink and bud *forth*, promising a blessed Harvest: But O! (with what consternation and horror should I speak it?) the Cares and pleasures of this Life, the Lusts and Corruptions of my base Heart springing up, have quite destroyed and choakt it; by which it appears it was not the Seed of God, as I then imagined it to be; and now my expected Harvest shall be an heap, in the day of grief and desperate sorrow, *Isa.* 17. 11. I had Convictions, but they are gone: Troubles for Sin, Conscience of Duties, but all is blasted, and my Soul is now as a Barren Field, which God hath cursed.

Woe is me! I have revolted from God, and now that dreadful word, *Jer.* 17. 5. 9. is evidently fulfilled upon me; *For I am like the heath in the desart, that seeth not when good cometh; my Soul inhabits the parched places of the wilderness.* Alas! all my formal and heartless duties were but as so many scare-crows in the Field, which could not defend these slight workings from being devoured by the Infernal Fowls. Had these Principles been the Seed of God, no doubt they would have continued and overcome the World, 1 *John* 2. 19. Wretched Soul! thy Case is sad, it will be better with the uncultivated Wilderness, than with such a miscarrying Soil, unless the great Husbandman plow thee

thee up the second time, and sow thy Heart with better Seed.

The Careless Soul's Reflection.

2. And are the Corruptions of my Heart to Grace, what Fowls, Weeds, and Mildews are to the Corn? O what need have I then to watch my Heart, and keep it with all diligence; for in the Life of that Grace is wrapt up the Life of my Soul. He that carries a Candle in his Hand in a blustring Stormy Night, had need to cover it close, lest it be blown out, and be left in darkness. O let me never say, God hath promised it shall persevere, and therefore I need not be so solicitous to preserve it; for as this Inference is quite opposite to the nature of true Grace and Assurance, which never incourage to carelesness, but provoke the Soul to an industrious use of means to preserve it; So, it is in it self an irrational and senseless Conclusion, which will never follow from any Scripture Promise: For although it is readily granted, that God hath made many comfortable and sweet Promises to the Graces of his people, yet we must expect to enjoy the Benefits and Blessings of all those Promises, in that way and order in which God hath promised them; and that is in the careful and diligent use of those means which he hath prescribed, *Ezek.* 36. 36. 37. for Promises do not exclude, but imply the use of Means, *Acts* 27. 31. I know my Life is determined to a day, to an hour, and I shall live out every minute God hath appointed; but yet I am bound to provide Food, Raiment and Physick to preserve it.

To

The Doubting Soul's Reflections.

To conclude, Let all doubting Chriſtians reflect ſeriouſly upon this Truth, and ſuck Marrow and Fatneſs out of it to ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh them againſt all their fears; your Life, your Spiritual Life, hath for many years hanged in ſuſpence before you; and you have often ſaid with *David*, I ſhall one day fall by the Hand of *Saul*. Deſponding, trembling Soul, lift up thine Eyes and look upon the Fields, the Corn lives ſtill, and grows up; though Birds have watch'd to devour it, Snows have covered it, Beaſts have dropt it, Weeds have almoſt choak'd it, yet it's preſerved. And hath not God more care of that precious Seed of his own Spirit in thee, than any Husbandman hath of his Corn? Hath he not ſaid, *That having begun the good work in thee, he will perfect it to the day of Chriſt?* Phil. 1. 6. Hath he not ſaid, *I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh?* John 10. 28. Haſt thou not many times ſaid, and thought of it, as thou doſt now, and yet it lives? O what matter of unſpeakable joy and comfort is this to upright Souls! Well then, be not diſcouraged, for thou do'ſt not run as one uncertain, nor fight as one that beats the Air, 1 *Cor.* 9. 26. but the Foundation of God ſtands ſure, having this Seal, the Lord knows who are his, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. Though thy Grace be weak, thy God is ſtrong; though the Stream ſeem ſometimes to fail, yet it's fed by an ever-flowing Fountain.

The

The POEM.

'TIS justly wondred that an ear of Corn
Should come at last in safety to the Barn;
It runs through many hazards, threatning harms,
Betwixt the Sower's Hands, and Reaper's Arms:
The Earth no sooner takes it from the sack,
But you may see behind the Sower's back
A Troop of Thieves, which would at once destroy
That Seed in which lyes hid the Seed of joy.
This dangerous period past, it soon doth fall
Into a second, no less critical;
It shooteth forth the tender blade, and then
The noxious Weeds endanger it again;
These clasp about it till they kindly choak
The Corn, as flattering Ivy doth the Oak.
Are Weeds destroyed, and all that danger past?
Lo now another comes, the worst at last;
For when i'th' ear it blows, begins to kern,
A mildew smites it, which you can't discern,
Nor any way pervent till all be lost;
The Corn destroy'd, with all your hopes and cost.
Thus saving Grace, that precious Seed of Joy,
Which Hell and Nature plot how to destroy,
Escapes ten Thousand dangers first and last?
O who can say now all the danger's past;
'Tis like a crazy Bark tost in a storm,
Or like a Taper which is strangely born
Without a Lanthorn in a blust'ring night;
Or like to glimmering sparks whose dying light
Is still preserv'd: The roaring waves swell high,
Like moving Mountains in the darkned Sky;
On their proud backs the little Bark is even
Mounted unto the Battlements of Heaven;

From

From thence dismounted to the Deeps doth slide,
Receiving Water upon every side;
Yet he whose voice the proudest Waves obey,
Brings it at last unto the quiet Key.
The blustring Winds strive with a fatal puff,
To bring the Tapor to a stinking snuff;
Their churlish blasts extinguish it, and then
Our gentle breath recovers it agen.
The fainting sparks beneath the Ashes lye,
Where choakt and smother'd they begin to die;
But these collected, we do gently blow,
Till from faint sparks to lively flames they grow;
Even thus is Grace preserv'd, thus kept alive;
By constant wonders, Grace doth live and thrive.

CHAP. XIV.

Upon the Patience of the Husbandman for the Harvest.

Our Husbandmen for Harvest wait and stay;
O let not any Saint do less than they.

OBSERVATION.

THE expectation of a good Harvest at last, makes the Husbandman with untired patience to digest all his labours. He that plows, plows in hope, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19 and they are not so irrational to think, they shall presently be partakers of their hope, nor so fooliſh to anticipate the Harvest, by cutting down their Corn before it be fully ripened, but are content to plow, sow and weed it;

t; and when it's fully ripe, then they go forth nto their Fields and reap it down with joy.

APPLICATION.

CAN a little Corn cause Men to digest so many difficult labours, and make them wait with invincible patience till the reaping time come? Much more should the expectation of Eternal Glory steel and fortifie my Spirit against all intercurrent hardships and difficulties. It least of all becomes a Christian to be of an hasty and impatient Spirit. *Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart*, Psal. 92. 11. *Behold the Husbandman waiteth*, &c. Jam. 5. 7. *Be patient therefore, my Brethern, for the coming of the Lord draws near.* There are three great Arguments *to perswade* Christians to a long-suffering and patient frame under sufferings. (1.) The example of Christ, *Isa.* 53. 7. to think how quietly he suffered all injuries and difficulties with invincible *patience*, is sufficient to shame the best of Christians, who are of such short Spirits. I have read of one *Elezarius*, a *Nobleman*, that when his Wife wondred at his exceeding great patience in bearing injuries; he thus answered her, You know sometimes my heart is ready to rise with indignation against such as wrong me, but I presently begin to think of the wrongs that Christ suffer'd, and say thus to my self, although thy Servant should pluck thy Beard, and smite thee on thy Face, this were nothing to *what* thy Lord suffered: He suffered more and greater things; and assure your self (Wife) I never leave off thinking on the injuries done to my Saviour, till such

ſuch time as my mind be ſtill and quiet. To this purpoſe it was well noted by *Bernard*, ſpeaking of Chriſt's Humiliation; Was Chriſt the Lord of Glory thus humbled and emptied of his fulneſs of Glory? And ſhall ſuch a worm as I ſwell? (2.) The deſert of ſin, *Lam.* 3. 39. *Why doth the living man complain?* It was a good ſaying of bleſſed *Greenham*: When ſin lyes heavy, affliction lyes light.

Dr. Taylor's *Great Exemplar*, p. 103.

And it is a famous inſtance which Dr. *Taylor* gives us of the Duke of *Conde*; I have read (ſaith he) when the Duke of *Conde* had voluntarily entred into the Incommodities of a Religious Poverty and Retirement; he was one day ſpy'd and pity'd by a Lord of *Italy*, who out of tenderneſs wiſh'd him to be more careful and nutritive of his Perſon; the good Duke anſwered, Sir, be not troubled, and think not that I am ill provided of Conveniences, for I ſend an Harbinger before me that makes ready my Lodgings, and takes care that I be Royally entertained. The Lord asked him, who was his Harbinger? He anſwered, the knowledge of my ſelf, and the conſideration of what I deſerve for my Sins, which is Eternal Torments; and when with this knowledge I arrive at my Lodgings, how unprovided ſoever I find it, methinks it is ever better than I deſerve. And as the ſenſe of ſin, which merits Hell, ſweetens preſent Difficulties; ſo, (to come home to the preſent ſimilitude) do the expectations and hopes of a bleſſed Harveſt and Reward in Heaven. This made *Abraham* willing to wander up and down many years as a Stranger in the World; for he looked

for

for a City that hath Foundations, *Whoſe Builder and Maker is God.* The hopes of ſuch a Harveſt is encouragement enough to work hard, and wait long; yet ſome Chriſtians are ſo impatient of it, that they would fain be reaping before the time; but as *God* hath, by an unalterable Law of Nature, appointed both the Seaſons of Seed-time and Harveſt (which are therefore called the appointed Weeks of the Harveſt) *Jer.* 5.24. and theſe cannot be haſten'd; but when we have done all that we can on our part, muſt wait till God ſend the former and the latter Rain, and given every natural cauſe its effect: So is it in reference to our Spiritual Harveſt; we are appointed to ſweat in the uſe of all God's Appointments, and when we have done all, muſt patiently wait till the Divine Decrees be accompliſhed, and the time of the Promiſe be fully come; *In due time we ſhall reap, if we faint not.* To which patient expectation, and quiet waiting for the Glory to come, theſe following Conſiderations are of excellent uſe.

1. As the Husbandman knows when the Seed-time is paſt, it will not be long to the Harveſt; and the longer he waits, the nearer ſtill it is: So the Chriſtian knows, *It is but yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10. 37. *And that now his ſalvation is nearer than when he firſt believed*, Rom. 13. 11. What a ſmall point of time is our waiting time, compared with Eternity? Yet a few days more, and then comes the long expected and welcome Harveſt.

2. The Husbandman can find other work to do, before the reaping time come; he need not ſtand idle,

idle, though he cannot yet reap. And cannot a Christian find any work to do for God, till he come to Heaven? O, there is much work to do, and such work as is only proper to this Season. You may now reprove sin, exhort to duty, succour the distressed; this is good work, and this is your only time for such work; the whole of Eternity will be taken up in other Imployments. *I think it meet* (saith *Peter*) *as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stir up your minds, knowing shortly, that I must put off this Tabernacle*, 2 Pet. 1. 13, 14. *q. d.* I know I have but a little time to work among you, I am almost at Heaven; and therefore am willing to husband this present moment as well as I can for you. O Christians! You need not stand idle, look round about you upon the multitude of forlorn Sinners, speak now to them for God, speak now to God for them; for shortly, you shall so speak no more, you shall see them no more till you see them at Christ's Bar; God leaves you here for their sakes, up and be doing: If you had done all you were to do for your selves and them, he would have you to Heaven immediately, you should not wait a moment longer for your Glory.

3. Husbandmen know, though they cannot yet gather in the precious Fruits of the Earth, yet all this while they are ripening and preparing for the Harvest; they would not house it green, or take it before its time. And is not this also my preparation time for Glory? As God prepared Heaven for his People, by an Eternal *Decree*, Mat. 25.34. by an Act of *Creation*, Heb. 11. 10. by the death of Christ, which made a purchase of it, *Heb.* 10.19,20.

and

nd by his Aſcenſion into it, *John* 14. 2, 3. So the eaſon why we are kept here, is in order to our tting for it. Heaven is ready, but we are not ful- y ready; the Barn is fit to receive the Corn, but he Corn is not fit to be gathered into it. *But for his ſelf-ſame thing God is now working us*, 2 Cor. . 5. he is every day at work, by Ordinances, and y Providences, to perfect his work in us; and s ſoon as that is finiſhed, we ſhall hear a voice ike that, Rev. 11. 12. *Come up hither, and imme- diately we ſhall be in the Spirit*; for how ardently oever we long for that deſireable day, Chriſt ongs for it more than we can do.

4. The Husbandman is glad of the Firſt-fruits, hat incourages him, tho' the greateſt part be yet ut; And have not you received the Firſt-fruits f that Glory? Have you no Earneſts, Pledges, and irſt-fruits of it? 'Tis your own fault, if every ay you feed not upon ſuch bleſſed comforts of he Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 23. *Rom.* 5. 2. 1 *Pet.* 8. 9. O ow might the interpoſing time, even all the days f your patience here, be ſweetned with ſuch pre- ibations of the Glory to come!

5. Husbandmen know 'tis beſt to reap, when 'tis it to reap; one handful fully ripe is worth many heaves of green Corn. And you know, Heaven will be ſweeteſt to you, when you are fitteſt for it; he Child would pluck the Apple while it s green, ut he might gather it eaſier, and taſte it ſweeter, y tarrying longer for it. We would fain be glori- ied *per ſaltum*. When we have got a taſte of Hea- ven, we are all in haſte to be gone. Then, O that I had Wings as a Dove! I would fly away and be

at

at rest. Then we cry to God for our selves, as *Moses* for his Sister *Miriam*, *Heal her* [*now*] *O God, I beseech thee*, Numb. 12. 13. Glorifie me now, O Lord, I pray thee: But surely, as God hath contrived thy Glory in the best of ways, so he hath appointed for thee the fittest Seasons; and whenever thou art gathered into Glory, thou shalt come as a shock of Corn in its Season.

REFLECTION.

The Longing Soul's Reflection.

I have waited for thy Salvation, O God! Having received thy First-fruits, my Soul longs to fill its Bosom with the full-ripe Sheaves of Glory. *As the Hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my Soul for thee, O God!* O, when shall I come and appear before God! I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. When shall I see that most lovely Face! When shall I hear his Soul-transporting Voice! Some need patience to dye, I need it as much to live! Thy sights, O God, by Faith have made this World a burthen, this Body a burthen, and this Soul to cry like thirsty *David*, O that one would give me of the Waters of *Bethlehem* to drink! The Husbandman longs for his Harvest, because it is the reward of all his toyl and labour; but what is his Harvest to mine? What is a little Corn to the enjoyment of God? What is the joy Harvest, to the joy of Heaven? What are the shoutings of Men in the Fields, to the Acclamations of glorified Spirits in the Kingdom of God? Lord, I have gone forth bearing more precious Seed than they; When shall I return rejoycing, bring-

bringing my Sheaves with me? Their Harveſt comes when they receive their Corn, mine comes when I leave it. O much deſired Harveſt! O day of the gladneſs of my Heart! How long Lord! How long! *Here* I *wait* as the *poor Man* at *Bethesda*'s *Pool*, looking when my turn will come, but every one ſteps into *Heaven* before me; yet, *Lord*, I am content to *wait* till my *time* be fully come. I would be content to ſtay for my *Glorification*, till I have finiſht the work of my *Generation*; and when I have done the will of God, then to receive the Promiſe. If thou have any work on Earth to uſe me in, I am content to abide: Behold, the Husbandman waiteth, and ſo will I; for thou art a God of Judgment, and bleſſed are all they that wait for thee.

The Lingring Soul's Reflection.

2. But how doth my ſlothful Soul ſink down into the fleſh, and ſettle it ſelf in the *Love* of this *Animal Life!* How doth it hug, and wrap up it ſelf in the Garment of this Mortality, not deſiring to be removed hence, to the more perfect and bleſſed ſtate! The Husbandman indeed is content to ſtay till the appointed *Weeks* of the *Harveſt*; but would he be content to wait always? O my *ſenſual Heart!* is this Life of Hope as contentful to thee, as the Life of Viſion will be? Why doſt thou not groan within thy ſelf, that this *Mortality* might be ſwallowed up of Life? Doth not the Scripture deſcribe the *Saints* by their earneſt looking for the *Mercy* of our Lord Jeſus unto Eternal Life? *Jude* 21. *By their haſtening unto the coming of the day of God?* 2 Pet. 3. 12. What is the matter that my Heart hangs back? Doth guilt lye upon my Conſcience? Or have

have I gotten into a pleaſant Condition in the World, which makes me ſay as *Peter* on the *Mount*, *It's good to be here?* Or want I the Aſſurance of a better ſtate? Muſt God make all my Earthly Comforts die, before I ſhall be willing to die? Awake Faith, awake my Love; beat up the drowzy deſires of my Soul, that I may ſay, make haſte my Beloved, and come away.

The POEM.

NO prudent Husbandman expects
The fruit of what he ſows,
Till every cauſe have its effects;
And then he reaps and mows.
He works in hope the year throughout,
And counts no labour loſt,
If when the Seaſon comes about,
His Harveſt quit his coſt.
His rare example juſtly may
Rebuke, and put to ſhame
My Soul which ſows its Seed one day,
And looks to reap the ſame.
Is curſed Nature now become
So kind a Soyl to Grace,
That to Perfection it ſhould come
Within ſo ſhort a ſpace?
Grace ſprings not up with ſpeed and eaſe,
Like Muſhrooms in a Night,
But rather by degrees increaſe,
As doth the Morning-light.
Is Corn ſo dear to Husbandman?
Much more is Heaven to me;
Why ſhould not I have patience thence,
To wait as well as he?

To Promiſes appointed Tears,
By God's Decrees are ſet;
Theſe once expir'd, beyond its fears
My Soul ſhall quickly get.
How ſmall a part of haſty time,
Which quickly will expire,
Doth me within this World confine,
And then comes my deſire?
Come, Lord, how long! My Soul hath gaſp'd,
Faith my Affections warms;
O when ſhall my poor Soul be claſp'd
In its Redeemers Arms?
The Time ſeems long, yet here I'll lye
'Till thou, my God, do call,
It is enough, Eternity
Will make amends for all.

CHAP. XV.

Upon the Harveſt Seaſon.

Corn fully ripe is reap'd, and gather'd in,
So muſt your Selves, when ripe in Grace or Sin.

OBSERVATION.

WHen the Fields are White to Harveſt, then Husbandmen walk through then, rub the Ears; and finding the grain full and ſolid, they preſently prepare their Scythes and Sickles, ſend for their Harveſt-men, who quickly Reap and Mow them down; and after theſe follow the Binders, who ſtitch it up; from the Field where it grew its carried

carried to the Barn, where it is thraſhed out; the good *Grain* gathered into an heap, the *Chaff* ſeparated and burnt, or thrown to the Dunghil. How bare and naked do the Fields look after Harveſt, which before were pleaſant to behold? When the Harveſt-men enter into the Field, it is (to allude to that, *Joel* 2. 3.) before them, like the Garden of *Eden*, and behind them a deſolate Wilderneſs; and in ſome places it's uſual to ſet a Fire to the dry Stubble, when the Corn is houſed; which rages furiouſly, and covers it all with Aſhes.

APPLICATION.

THe Application of this, I find made to my hands by Chriſt himſelf in *Mat.* 13. 38, 39. *The field is the World, the good ſeed are the children of the Kingdom, the tares are the children of the Wicked One, the enemy that ſowed them is the Devil, the Harveſt is the end of the World, the Reapers are the Angels.*

The Field is the World; there both the godly and ungodly live and grow together, till they be both ripe, and then they ſhall both be reaped down by death; Death is the *Sickle* that reaps down both. I will open this Allegory in the following Particulars.

1. In a catching Harveſt, when the Husbandman ſees the Clouds begin to gather and grow black, he hurries in his Corn with all poſſible haſte, and houſes day and night.

So doth God the great Husbandman, he hurries the Saints into their Graves, when Judgments are coming upon the World, *Iſa.* 57. 1. *The righteous perish,*

Periſh, and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away; none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. Methuſelah died the year before the Flood, *Auguſtine* a little before the Sacking of *Hippo*, *Pareus* juſt before the taking of *Heidelberge*, *Luther* a little before the Wars brake out in *Germany*; but what ſpake I of ſingle Saints? Sometimes the Lord Houſes great numbers together, before ſome *ſweeping Judgment* comes. How many bright and glorious Stars did ſet almoſt together, within the compaſs of a few years, to the aſtoniſhment of many wiſe and tender hearts in *England*. I find ſome of them thus ranked in a Funeral *Elegy*.

The Learned Twiſſe *went firſt, (it was his right)*
Then holy Palmer, Burroughs, Love, Gouge, White,
Hill, Whitaker, *grave* Gataker, *and* Strong,
Perne, Marſhal, Robinſon, *all gone along.*
I have not named them half, their only ſtrife
Have been (of late) who ſhould firſt part with Life.
Theſe few who yet ſurvive, ſick of this Age,
Long to have done their parts and leave the Stage.

The Lord ſees it better for them to be underground than above ground, and therefore by a merciful Providence ſets them out of harms way.

2. Neither the Corn, or Tares, can poſſibly reſiſt the ſharp and keen Sickle, when it's applyed to them by the Reaper's Hand; neither can the godly or ungodly reſiſt the ſtroke of Death when *God inflicts* it, *Eccleſ.* 8. 8. *No man can keep alive his own Soul in the day of death, and there is no diſcharge in that war.* The frail Body of Man is as unable to

withſtand that ſtroke, as the weak Reeds, or feeble Stalks of the Corn are to reſiſt the keen Scythe and ſharp Sickle.

3. The Reapers receive the Wheat which they cut down, into their Arms and Boſom. Hence that expreſſion by way of imprecation upon the wicked, *Pſal.* 129. 7. *Let them be as the graſs upon the houſe-top, which withers before it grows up, wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth ſheaves, his boſom.* Such withered Graſs are the wicked, who are never taken into the Reapers Boſom; but as ſoon as Saints are cut down by death, they fall into the Hands and Boſoms of the Angels of God, who bear them in their Arms and Boſoms to God their Father, *Luke* 16. 22. For look, as theſe bleſſed Spirits did exceedingly rejoyce at their Converſion, *Luke* 15. 10. and thought it no diſhonour to miniſter to them whilſt they ſtood in the Field, *Heb.* 1. 14. So when they are cut down by death, they will rejoyce to be their Convoy to Heaven.

4. When the Corn and Weeds are reap'd or mowed down, they ſhall never grow any more in that Field; neither ſhall we ever return to live an Animal Life any more after death, *Job* 7. 9, 10. *As the cloud is conſumed and vaniſheth away; ſo he that goeth down to the grave, ſhall come up no more; he ſhall return no more to his houſe, neither ſhall his place know him any more.*

Laſtly, (To come home to the particular ſubject of this Chapter) the Reapers are never ſent to cut down the Harveſt, till it be fully ripe; neither will God reap down Saints or Sinners, till they be come

come to a maturity of Grace or wickedneſs. Saints are not reap'd down till their Grace be ripe, *Job* 5. 26. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, as a ſhock of Corn cometh in its ſeaſon.* 'Not that every godly Man dies in ſuch a full old Age (ſaith Mr. *Caryl* on the place) but yet in one ſenſe it is an univerſal truth, and ever fulfilled; for whenſoever they die, they die in a good Age; yea, though they die in the ſpring and flower of their youth, they die in a good old Age, (*i. e.*) they are ripe for death whenever they dye: when-ever a godly Man dies, it's Harveſt time with him; though in a natural Capacity he be cut down while he is green, and cropt in the bud or bloſſom, yet in his ſpiritual Capacity he never dies before he be ripe. God ripens his ſpeedily, when he intends to take them out of the World ſpeedily; he can let out ſuch warm Rays and Beams of his Spirit upon them, as ſhall ſoon maturate the Seeds of Grace into a preparedneſs for Glory.

The wicked alſo have their ripening time for Hell and Judgment; God doth with much long-ſuffering endure the Veſſels of Wrath prepared for Deſtruction. Of their ripeneſs for Judgment the Scripture often ſpeaks, *Gen.* 15. 16. *The ſin of the* Amorites *is not yet full.* And of *Babylon* it's ſaid. *Jer.* 51. 13. *O thou that dwelleſt upon many waters, thine end is come, and the meaſure of thy covetouſneſs.*

'Tis worth remarking, that the meaſure of the ſin, and the end of the Sinner come together. So *Joel* 3. 13. *Put ye in the ſickle, for the harveſt of the*

earth is ripe, for the preſs is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedneſs is great. Where note, Sinners are not cut down till they be ripe and ready. Indeed they are never ripe for death, nor ready for the Grave; that is, fit to die: Yet they are always ripe for wrath, and ready for Hell before they die. Now as Husbandmen judge of ripeneſs of their Harveſt, by the colour and hardneſs of the Grain; ſo may we judge of the ripeneſs both of Saints and Sinners, for Heaven or Hell, by theſe following Signs

Three Signs of the Maturity of Grace.

1. WHen the Corn is near ripe, it bowes the head, and ſtoops lower than when it was green. When the People of God are near ripe for *Heaven*, they grow more humble and *ſelf-denying*, than in the days of their firſt profeſſion. The longer a Saint grows in this *World*, the better he is ſtill acquainted with his own Heart, and his Obligations to God; both which are very humbling things. *Paul* had one foot in Heaven, when he called himſelf the chiefeſt of Sinners, and leaſt of Saints, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *Eph.* 3. 8. A Chriſtian in the progreſs of his Knowledge and Grace, is like a *Veſſel* caſt into the Sea, the more it fills, the deeper it ſinks. Thoſe that went to Study at *Athens* (ſaith *Plutarch*) at firſt coming ſeemed to themſelves to be wiſe Men; afterwards, only Lovers of wiſdom, and after that, only Rhetoricians, ſuch as could ſpeak of *Wiſdom*, but knew little of it, and *laſt of* all

all, Ideots in their own Apprehenſions; ſtill with the increaſe of Learning, laying aſide their Pride and Arrogancy.

2. When Harveſt is nigh, the Grain is more ſolid and pithy than ever it was before; green Corn is ſoft and ſpungy, but ripe Corn is ſubſtantial and weighty: So it is with Chriſtians; the Affections of a young Chriſtian perhaps are more ferverous and ſprightly, but thoſe of a grown Chriſtian are more judicious and ſolid; their Love to Chriſt abounds more and More in all Judgment, *Phil.* 1. 9. The Limbs of a Child are more active and pliable, but as he grows up to a perfect ſtate, the parts are more conſolidated and firmly knit. The Fingers of an old Muſician are not ſo nimble, but he hath a more judicious Ear in Muſick, than in his Youth.

3. When Corn is dead ripe, it's apt to fall of its own accord to the ground, and there ſhed; whereby it doth as it were anticipate the Harveſt-man, and calls upon him to put in the Sickle: Not unlike to which are the lookings and longings, the groanings and haſtenings of ready Chriſtians to their expected Glory; they haſten to the coming of the Lord, or as *Montanus* more fitly renders it, They haſten the coming of the Lord; (*i. e.*) they are urgent and inſtant in their deſires, and cries to haſten his coming; their deſires ſally forth to meet the Lord, they willingly take Death by the Hand; as the Corn bends to the Earth, ſo do theſe Souls to Heaven. This ſhews their Harveſt to be near.

Six Signs of the Maturity of Sin.

WHEN Sinners are even dead ripe for Hell, these Signs appear upon them, or by these at least, you may conclude those Souls not to be far from wrath upon whom they appear.

1. When Conscience is wasted and grown past feeling, having no remorse for sin; when it ceases to check, reprove and smite for sin any more, the day of that Sinner is at hand, his Harvest is even come. The greatest violation of Conscience is the greatest of sins; this was the Case of the forlorn *Gentiles*, among whom Satan had such a plentiful Harvest; the patience of God suffered them to grow till their Consciences were grown seared and past feeling, *Eph.* 4. 19. When a Member is so mortified, that if you lance and cut it never so much, no fresh Blood, or quick Flesh appears, nor doth the Man feel any pain in all this, then 'tis time to cut it off.

2. When men give themselves over to the satisfaction of their Lusts, to commit sin with greediness, then are they grown to a Maturity of Sin; when Men have slipt the Reins of Conscience, and rush headlong into all Impiety, then the last Sands of God's patience are running down. Thus *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the Cities about them, in like manner gave themselves over to wickedness and strange sins; and then Justice quickly trust them up for an example, suffering the vengeance of Eternal Fire.

3. That

3. That Man is even ripe for Hell, that is become a Contriver of sin, a Designer, a Student in wickedness; one would think it strange, that any Man should set his Invention on work upon such a Subject as sin is; that any should study to become a dexterous Artist this way, and yet the Scripture frequently speaks of such, *whose bellies prepare deceit*, Job 15. 35. *who travel in pain to bring forth*, this deformed Birth, ver. 20. *who wink with their eyes*, whilst plodding wickedness, as Men use to do when they are most intent upon the Study of any knotty Problem, *Prov.* 6. 13. These have so much of Hell already in them, that they are more than half in Hell already.

4. He that of a forward Professor is turn'd a bitter Persecutor, is also within a few rounds of the top of the Ladder; the contempt of their light, the Lord hath already punish'd upon them, in their obduracy and madness against the light. Reader, if thou be gone thus far, thou art almost gone beyond all hope of recovery. Towards other *Sinners*, *God* usually excercises more patience, but with such he makes short work. When *Judas* turns Traytor to his Lord, he is quickly sent to his own place. Such as are again intangled and overcome of those Lusts they once seemed to have clean escaped, these bring upon themselves swift Damnation, and their judgment lingers not, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3, 30.

5. He that can endure no reproof or controul in the way of his sin, but derides all counsel, and like a strong current rages at, and sweeps away all obstacles in his way, will quickly fall into the dead Lake, *Prov.* 29. 1. *He that being often reproved hardeneth*

deneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. This is a Death-spot, a Hell-spot, where-ever it appears. From this very symptom the Prophet plainly predicted the approaching ruin of *Amaziah*, 2 Chron. 25. 16. *I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not harkened to my voice.* He that will not be timely *counselled*, shall be quickly *destroyed*.

Lastly, When a Man comes to glory in his sin, and boast of his wickedness, then it's time to cut him down; *whose end is destruction, whose glory is in their shame*, Phil. 3. 19. This is a braving, a daring of God to his Face, and with whomsoever he bears long, to be sure these are none of them.

You see now what are the signs of a full-ripe Sinner; and when it comes to this, either with a Nation, or with a single Person, then ruin is near, *Joel* 3. 13. *Gen.* 15 16. It is in the filling up of the measure of sin, as in the filling of a Vessel cast into the Sea, which rowls from side to side, taking in the Water by little and little till it be full, and then down it sinks to the bottom. Mean while, admirable is Divine Patience, which bears with these Vessels of Wrath whilst fitting for Destruction.

REFLECTIONS.

The Reflection of a Growing Christian.

1. Chear thy self, O my Soul! with the Heart-strengthening Bread of this Divine Meditation. Let Faith turn every drop of this Truth into a Soul-reviving Cordial. God hath sown the precious Seed of Grace upon my Soul; and though my Heart

Heart hath been an unkind Soyl, which hath kept it back, and much hindered its growth, yet bleſſed be the Lord, it ſtill grows on, though by ſlow degrees; and from the ſpringing of the Seed, and ſhootings forth of thoſe gracious habits, I may conclude an approaching Harveſt: Now is my Salvation nearer than when I believed; every day I come nearer to my Salvation, *Rom.* 13. 11. O that every day I were more active for the God of my Salvation! Grow on, my Soul, and add to thy Faith Vertue, to thy Vertue Knowledge, *&c.* Grow on from Faith to Faith; keep thy ſelf under the ripening influences of heavenly Ordinances; the faſter thou groweſt in Grace, the ſooner thou ſhalt be reaped down in Mercy, and bound up in the bundle of Life, 1 *Sam.* 25. 29. I have not yet attained the meaſure and proportion of *Grace* aſſigned to me, neither am I already *perfect*, but am reaching forth to the things before me, and preſſing towards the mark for the prize of my heavenly Calling, *Phil.* 3. 12, 13. O Mercy to be admired! that I who lately had one Foot in Hell, ſtand now with one Foot in Heaven!

The Reflection of the decaying Chriſtian.

2. But the Caſe is far different with me, whilſt others are ripening apace for Heaven, I am withering; many a Soul plowed up by Conviction, and ſown by Sanctification long after me, hath quite over-topt and out-grow me; my ſweet and early Bloſſoms are nipt and blown off, my bright Morning overcaſt and clouded; had I kept on according to the rate of my firſt growth, I had either now been in Heaven, or at leaſt in the *Suburbs* of it

on Earth; but my Graces wither and languish, my Heart contracts and cools to heavenly things; the Sun and Rain of Ordinances and Providence improve not my Graces; how sad therefore is the state of my Soul?

The Reflection of a hardning Sinner.

3. Thy case, O declining Saint, is sad! But not like mine; thine is but a temporary remission of the Acts of Grace, which is recoverable; but I am judicially hardning, and *treasuring up to my self wrath against the day of wrath*, Rom. 2. 5. Time was when I had some tender sense of sin, when I could mourn and grieve for it, now I have none at all. My Heart is grown stupid and sottish. Time was when I had some conscientious care of Duty, and my Heart would smite me for the neglect of it; but now none at all. Wretched Soul! What wilt thou do? Thou art gone far indeed, a few steps farther will put thee beyond hope; hitherto I stand in the Field, the long-suffering God doth yet spare me; yet spare me, while he hath cut down many of my Companions in Sin round about me. What doth this admirable patience, this long-suffering drawn out to a wonder, speak concerning me? Doth it not tell me, that the Lord is not willing I should perish, but rather come to Repentance? 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. And what Argument is like his pity and patience, to lead a Soul to Repentance? *Rom.* 2. 4. Oh that I may not frustrate at last, the end of a long-suffering God! Lest he Proportion the degrees of his wrath, according to the length of his patience.

THE

THE POEM.

WHen fields are white to Harveſt, forth you go
With Scythes and Sickles to reap down and mow.
Down go the laden ears flat to the ground,
Which thoſe that follow having ſtitcht and bound,
It's carted home unto the Barn, and ſo
The fields are rid where lately Corn did grow.
This World's the field, and they that dwell therein,
The Corn and Tares, which long have ripening beens,
Angels the Reapers, and the Judgment Day
The times of Harveſt, when like Corn and Hay,
The fading Flower of earthly Glory muſt
Be mowed down, and levell'd with the duſt.
The Barns are Heaven and Hell; the time draws nigh
When through the darkned Clouds, and troubled Sky
The Lord ſhall break, a dreadful Trumpet ſhall
Sound to the dead, the Stars from Heaven fall,
The rowling Spheres with horrid flames ſhall burn,
And then the Tribes on earth ſhall wail and mourn.
The Judgment ſet, before Chriſt's awful Throne
All fleſh ſhall be conveen'd, and every one
Receive his doom; which done, the Juſt ſhall be
Bound in Life's bundle; even as you ſee
The full ripe ears of Wheat bound up, and born
In Sheaves with joy unto the Owner's Barn.
This done, the Angels next in bundles bind
The Tares together, as they had combin'd
In acting Sin, ſo now their lot muſt be
To burn together in one Miſery.
Drunkards with Drunkards pinion'd, ſhall be ſent
To Hell together in one Regiment.
Adulterers and Swearers there ſhall lye
In Flames among their old Society.

O dreadful howling! O the hideous moans
Of fetter'd Sinners! O the Tears! The Groans!
The doleful Lamentation as they go
Chain'd fast together to their place of woe!
The World thus clear'd, as Fields when Harveſt's in,
Shall be no more a Stage for acting Sin;
With purifying Flames it ſhall be burn'd,
Its ſtately Fabricks into Aſhes turn'd.
Ceaſe then, my Soul, to dote on, or admire
This ſplendid World, which is reſerv'd for Fire.
Leave the Company of Sinners here,
As thou wouldſt not be ſhackel'd with them there.

CHAP. XVI.

Upon the Care of Husbandmen to provide for Winter.

Your Winter ſtore in Summer you provide;
To Chriſtian Prudence this muſt be apply'd.

OBSERVATION.

GOod Husbands are careful in Summer to provide for Winter, then they gather in their Winter ſtore; Food and Fewel for themſelves, and fodder for their Cattel. *He that gathers in Summer is a wiſe Son, but he that ſleeps in Harveſt is a Son that cauſes ſhame*, Prov. 10. 5. A well choſen Seaſon is the greateſt Advantage of any to Action, which as it is ſeldom found in haſte, ſo it is often loſt by delay. 'Tis a good Proverb which the frugal

gal *Dutch* have among them; *Bonus Servatius facit bonum Bonifacium*; a good Saver will make a good Benefactor. And 'tis a good Proverb of our own; he that neglects the occasion, the occasion will neglect him. Husbandmen know that Summer will not last all the year, neither will they trust to the hopes of a mild and favourable Winter, but in season provide for the worst.

APPLICATION.

WHat excellent *Christians* should we be, were we but as provident and thoughtful for our Souls? 'Tis doubtless a singular point of Christian Wisdom, to foresee a day of Spiritual Straits and Necessities, and during the day of *Grace* to make provision for it. This great Gospel-truth is excellently shadowed forth in this natural Observation, which I shall branch out into these Seven Particulars.

1. Husbandmen know there is a change and vicissitude of Seasons and Weather; though it be pleasant Summer Weather now, yet Winter will tread upon the heel of Summer: Frosts, Snows, and great falls of *Rain* must be expected. This alternate cause of Seasons in nature, is settled by a firm Law of the God of Nature, to the end of the World, *Gen.* 8. 22. *Whilst the earth remaineth, seed times and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night, shall not cease.*

And *Christians* know, that there are changes in the right Hand of the most High, in reference to their Spiritual Seasons. If there be a *Spring-time* of the Gospel, there will also be an *Autumn*; if a day

of

of *Prosperity*, it will set in a night of *Adversity*; *for God hath set the one over against the other*; Eccles. 7. 14. In Heaven there is a day of everlasting serenity, in Hell a night of perfect and endless horror and darkness; on Earth light and darkness take their turns, prosperity and adversity, even to Souls as well as Bodies, succeed each other. If there be a Gospel-day, a day of Grace now current, it will have its period and determination, *Gen.* 3. 6.

2. *Common Prudence* and *Experience* inables the Husbandman in the midst of Summer to foresee a Winter, and provide for it before he feel it; yea, natural instinct teaches this to the very Birds of the Air, and Beasts of the Field.

And *Spiritual Wisdom* should teach *Christians* to exercise their foreseeing Faculties, and not suffer them to feel evil before they fear it. But O the stupifying nature of Sin! Though the Stork in the Heavens knows her appointed time, and the Turtle, Crane and Swallow the time of their coming, yet Man, whom God hath made wiser than the Fowls of the Air, in this acts quite below them; *Jer.* 8. 7.

3. The end of God's ordaining a Summer Season, and sending warm and pleasant Weather, is to ripen the Fruits of the Earth, and give the Husbandman fit opportunity to gather them in.

And God's design in giving men a day of *Grace*, is to furnish them with an opportunity for the everlasting happiness and salvation of their Souls, *Rev.* 2. 21. *I gave her a space to repent.* It is not a meer reprisal of the Soul, or only a delay of the execution of threatned Wrath, though there be much

much Mercy in that; but the peculiar aim of this patience and bounty of God, is to open for them a way to escape the wrath to come, *by leading them to Repentance*, Rom. 2. 4.

4. The Husbandman doth not find all Harvest-seasons alike favourable, sometimes they have much fair weather, and meet with no hindrance in their business; other times 'tis a catching-harvest, but now and then a fair day, and then they must be nimble, or all is lost.

There is also great difference in Soul-seasons, some have had a long and fair season of Grace; a hundred and twenty years did God wait upon the old World, in the Ministery of *Noah*. Long did God wait on the gainsaying *Israelites*, Isa. 42. 14. *I have a long time held my peace, I have been still and refrained my self.* Others have a short and catching Season, all lyes upon a day, upon a nick of time, *Acts* 17. 30.

5. A proper Season neglected and lost, is irrecoverable. Many things in Husbandry must be done in their season, or cannot be done at all for that year; if he plow not, and sow not in the proper time, he loses the Harvest of that year.

'Tis even so as to Spiritual Seasons. Christ neglected, and Grace despised, in the season when God offers them, are irrecoverably lost, *Prov.* 1. 28. Then (that is, when the season is over) they shall call upon me, but I will not hear. O, there is a great deal of Time in a short opportunity! That may be done, or prevented, in an hour rightly timed, which cannot be done or prevented in a mans Life-time afterwards. There was one re-

solved

ſolved to kill *Julius Cæſar* ſuch a day; the night before, a Friend ſent him a Letter to acquaint him with it, but he being at Supper, and buſie in Diſcourſe, ſaid, To morrow is a new day, and indeed it was, *dies noviſſima*, his laſt day to him; whence it became a Proverb in *Greece*, *To morrow is a new day*. Our Glaſs runs in Heaven, and we cannot ſee how much or little of the Sand of God's patience is yet to run down; but this is certain, when that Glaſs is run, there is nothing to be done for our Souls, *Luke* 19. 42. *O that thou hadſt known, at leaſt, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.*

6. Thoſe *Husbandmen* that are careful and laborious in the Summer, have the comfort and benefit of it in Winter; he that then provides Fewel ſhall ſit warm in his Habitation, when others blow their Fingers. He that provides Food for his Family, and Fodder for his Cattle in the Harveſt, ſhall eat the Fruit of it, and enjoy the comfort of his labours, when others ſhall be expoſed to ſhifts and ſtraits. And he that provides for Eternity, and lays up for his Soul a good *Foundation* againſt the time to come, ſhall eat when others are hungry, and ſing when others howl, *Iſa.* 65. 13. A day of Death will come, and that will be a day of ſtraits to all negligent Souls; but then the diligent Chriſtian ſhall enjoy the peace and comfort that ſhall flow in upon his Heart, from his holy care and ſincere diligence in Duties; as 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our rejoycing, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in all ſincerity and godly ſimplicity we have had our converſation in this world.* So *Hezekiah*, 2 Kings 20. 3 *Remember*

ber now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart. A Day of Judgment will come, and then fooliſh Virgins, who neglected the Seaſon of getting Oyl in their Lamps, will be put to their ſhifts; then they come to the wiſe, and ſay, Give us of your Oyl, *Mat.* 25. 8. 9. but they have none to ſpare, and the Seaſon of buying is then over.

7. No wiſe Husbandman will neglect a fit opportunity of gathering in his Hay and Corn, upon a preſumption of much fair weather to come; he will not ſay, The weather is ſetled, and I need not trouble my ſelf, tho' my Corn and Hay be fit for the Houſe, yet I may get it in another time as well as now.

And no wiſe *Chriſtian* will loſe a preſent Seaſon for his Soul, upon the hopes of much more time yet to come; but will rather ſay, Now is my time; and I know not what will be hereafter; hereafter I may wiſh to ſee one of the days of the Son of Man, and not ſee it, *Luk.* 17.22. 'Tis ſad to hear, how cunning ſome Men are to diſpute themſelves out of Heaven, as if the Devil had hired them to plead againſt their own Souls; ſometimes urging the example of thoſe that were called at the *eleventh* hour, *Mat.* 20. 6. and ſometimes that of the penitent Thief: But, O! to how little purpoſe is the former pleaded; they that were called at the *eleventh* hour, were never called before, as theſe have been; no Man had hired, that is, called or invited them to Chriſt; and for the Thief, (as Mr. *Fenner* rightly obſerves) it was a ſingular and extraordinary Example! It was done when Chriſt hang'd

hang'd on the Croſs, and was to be Inaugurated: then Kings manifeſt ſuch Bounty, and pardon ſuch Crimes, as are never pardoned afterwards. Beſides, God was then in a way of working Miracles; then he rent the Rocks, open'd the Graves, raiſed the Dead, and converted this Thief; but God is now out of that way.

REFLECTIONS.

The Careleſs Soul's Reflection.

1. I have indeed been a good Husband for the World; with what Care and Providence have I looked out for my ſelf and my Family, to provide Food to nouriſh them, and Cloaths to defend them againſt the Aſperities of Winter? Mean while, neglecting to make proviſion for Eternity, or take care for my Soul. O my deſtitute Soul! How much have I ſlighted and undervalued thee? I have taken more care for an Horſe, or an Ox, than for thee; a well-ſtored Barn, but an empty Soul. Will it not ſhortly be with me, as with that careleſs Mother, who, when her Houſe was on fire, buſily beſtir'd her ſelf to ſave the Goods, but forgot the Child? (though it were ſaved by another hand) And then minding her Child, ran up and down like one diſtracted, wringing her hands, and crying, O my Child, my Child! I have ſaved my Goods, and loſt my Child! Such will be the caſe of thee, my Soul, *Mat.* 16. 26. Beſides, how eaſie will my Conviction be at the Bar of Chriſt? Will not my Providence and Care for the things of this Life, leave me ſpeechleſs and ſelf-condemned in that day? What ſhall I anſwer when

when the Lord ſhall ſay, Thou couldſt foreſee a Winter, and ſeaſonably provide for it? Yea, thou hadſt ſo much care of thy very Beaſts, to provide for their Neceſſities; And why tookeſt thou no care for thy Soul? Was that only not worth the caring for?

The Preſumptuous Soul's Reflection.

2. Is it ſo dangerous to neglect a preſent proper Seaſon of Grace? What then have I done, who have ſuffered many ſuch Seaſons to die away in my hand, upon a groundleſs hope of future opportunities? Ah, deluded Wretch! What if that ſuppoſition fail? Where am I then? I am not the Lord of time, neither am I ſure, that he who is, will ever vouchſafe an hour of Grace in old Age, to him that hath neglected many ſuch hours in youth; neither indeed is it ordinary for God ſo to do. 'Tis ſtored of *Caius Marius Victorius*, who lived about Three hundred years after Chriſt, and to his old Age continued a *Pagan*, but at laſt being convinced of the Chriſtian verity, he came to *Simplicianus*, and told him, He would be a Chriſtian; but neither he, nor the Church could believe it, it being ſo rare an example for any to be converted at his Age: But at laſt, ſeeing it was real, there was a ſhouting and gladneſs, and ſinging of Pſalms in all Churches, the People crying, *Caius Marius Victorius* is become a Chriſtian. This was written for a wonder, and what ground have I to think, that God will work ſuch wonders for me, who have neglected his ordinary means of Salvation?

3. Bleſs

The Industrious Soul's Reflection.

3. Bless the Lord, O my Soul! who gave thee a Season, a day for Eternal Life, which is more than he hath done for thousands; yea, bless the Lord for giving thee an Heart to understand and improve that Season. I confess I have not improv'd it as I ought; yet, this I can, (through Mercy) say, that however it fare in future times, with my outward Man, tho' I have no Treasures or Stores laid up on Earth; or if I have, they are but corruptible; yet I have a blessed hope laid up in Heaven, *Col.* 1. 5. I have Bags that wax not old. Whilst Worldings rejoyce in their Stores and Heaps, I rejoyce in these Eternal Treasures.

The POEM.

OBserve in Summers sultry heat,
How in the hottest day,
The Husbandman doth toyl and sweat
About his Corn and Hay.
If then he should not reap and mow,
And gather in his store,
How should he live, when for the Snow
He can't move out of door?
The little Ants and painful Bees,
By Natures Instinct led;
These have their Summer Granaries,
For Winter furnished.
But thou, my Soul, whose Summers day
It almost past and gone;
What Soul provision dost thou lay
In stock to spend upon?

If nature teacheth to prepare
For Temporal Life, much rather
Grace ſhould provoke to greater Care,
Soul food in time to gather.
Days of affliction and diſtreſs
Are haſting on apace,
If now I live in careleſsneſs,
How ſad will be my caſe!
Unworthy of the name of Man,
Who for that Soul of thine,
Wilt not do that which others can
Do for their very Kine.
Think, frugal Farmers, when you ſee
Your Mows of Corn and Hay,
What a conviction this will be
To you another day;
Who ne're were up before the Sun,
Nor brake an hour's reſt
For your poor Souls, as you have done
So often for a Beaſt.
Learn once to ſee the difference
Betwixt eternal things
And theſe poor tranſient things of ſence
That fly with Eagles wings.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Upon Reaping the same we Sow.

When with Tare Seeds you see choice Wheat to grow,
Then from your Lusts may Joy and comfort flow.

OBSERVATION.

GOd gives to every Seed its own Body, 1 *Cor.* 15. 38. At first he Created every Tree and Herb of the Field, having its Seed in its self, for the Conservation of the *species*, and they all inviolably observe the Law of their Creation. All Fruits naturally rise out of the Seeds and Roots proper to them: *Men do not gather Grapes of thorns, nor figs of Thistles.* Such productions would be monstrous in nature; and altho' the Juice or Sap of the Earth be the common matter of all kind of Fruits, yet it is specificated according to the different sorts of Plants and Seeds it nourishes. Where Wheat is sown, it's turned into Wheat; in an Apple-tree, it becomes an Apple; and so in every sort of Plants or Seeds, it's concocted into Fruit proper to the kind.

APPLICATION.

TRanslate this into Spiritual, and the Proposition shadowed forth by it, is fully expressed by the Apostle, Gal. 6. 7. *What a man sows, that shall he reap; they that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; and they that sow to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.* And as sure

as

s the Harveſt follows the Seed-time, ſo ſure ſhall uch Fruits and Effects reſult from the *Seeds* of ſuch ctions. *He that ſoweth iniquity, ſhall reap vanity,* rov. 22. 8. *And they that now go forth weeping, nd bearing precious ſeed, ſhall doubtleſs come again joycing, bringing their Sheaves with them,* Pſal. 126. The ſum of all is this, That our preſent actions ave the ſame reſpect and relation to future Re-ards and Puniſhments, as the Seed we ſow in our elds hath to the Harveſt we reap from it. Eve-y gracious action is the Seed of Joy, and every nful action the Seed of anguiſh and ſorrow, to e Soul that ſowed it. Two things are ſenſibly reſented to us in this ſimilitude.

1. That as the Seed ſown is preſently covered om our ſight under the clods, and for ſome time ter we ſee no more of it, and yet at laſt it appears ain, by which it's evident to us, that it is not ally loſt: So our preſent actions, though *Phyſi-lly* tranſient, and perhaps forgotten, yet are not ſt, but after a time ſhall appear again, in order a retribution.

If this were not ſo, all good and holy actions ould be to the loſs of him that performed them. ll the ſelf-denial, ſpending Duties, and ſharp fferings of the People of God, would turn to *their* mage; though not in point of honeſty, yet in oint of perſonal utility; and then alſo, what dif-rence would there be betwixt the actions of a an and a Beaſt, with reſpect to future good or il? Yea, Man would then be more feared and o-yed than God, and Souls be ſwayed in all their otions, only by the influence of preſent things;

and

and where then would Religion be found in the World? 'Tis an excellent note of *Drexelius*; "Our works (saith he) "do not pass away as soon as they "are done, but as Seed sown, shall "after a time rise up to all Eternity; whatever we think, speak or do, once spoken, thought or done, is Eternal, and abides for ever.

Drexelius de æternitate prope fin.

What *Zeuxes*, the Famous *Linmer*, said of his Work, may be truly said of all our Works; *Æternitati pingo*, I Paint for Eternity. O how careful should Men be of what they speak and do, whilst they are commanded so to speak, and so to do, as those that shall be judged by the perfect Law of liberty, *Jam.* 2. 12. What more transient than a vain word? And yet for such words, Men shall give an account in the day of Judgment, *Mat.* 12. 36. That's the first thing: Actions, like Seed, shall rise and *appear* again in order to a retribution.

2. The other thing held forth in this similitude is, *That* according to the nature of our actions now, will be the fruit and reward of them then. *Though* the fruit or consequence of holy *actions*, for *the* present may seem bitter, and the fruit of sinful *actions* sweet and pleasant, yet there is nothing more certain, than that their future fruits shall be according to their present nature and quality, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. Then *Dionysius* shall retract that saying, *Ecce quam prospera navigatio a Deo datur sacrilegis*; Behold how God favours our Sacriledges. Sometimes indeed (though but rarely) God causes Sinners to reap in this World, the same that they have sown; as hath been their Sin, such hath been their Punishment.

ment. It was openly confeſſed by *Adonibezek*, *Judg.* 1. 7. as I have done, ſo hath God requited me.

Socrates in his Church Hiſtory furniſhes us with a pertinent paſſage to this purpoſe, concerning *Valens* the Emperor, who was an *Arrian*, and a bitter Perſecutor of the *Chriſtians*: This Man, when eighty of the Orthodox Chriſtians ſailed from *Conſtantinople* to *Nicomedia*, to treat with him about the *Points* of *Arrianiſm*, and to ſettle the matter by way of diſpute; the Emperor hearing of their arrival, while they were yet in the *Harbour*, and not a man landed, cauſed the Ships to be fired wherein they were, and ſo conſumed them all. Not long after, in his *Wars* againſt the *Goths*, he was overthrown; and hiding himſelf in a little Cottage, the Enemy coming by, burnt it and him together. Thus this Wretch reap'd what he ſowed, burning for burning, the very ſame in kind paid him again; it is not always ſo in this World, but ſo it ſhall be in that to come; the Table ſhall then be turned, and the *Scene* altered; for ſhall not the Judge of all the World do righteouſly? *Diogenes* was tempted to think, that God had caſt off the *Government* of the *World*, when he ſaw the wicked proſper in their wickedneſs. On the ſame ground many have been tempted to *Atheiſm*; but then the World ſhall ſee diſtributive Juſtice ſhining out in its glory. *Tribulation, anguiſh and wrath, to every ſoul of man that doth evil; but glory, honour and peace, to every man that worketh good*, Rom. 2. 9, 10. Then 'twill ap-

Cum video mala fata bonis, ignoſcite quæſo i Sollicitor nullos eſſe putare Deos. Ovid.

pear what Seed we ſowed, what Lives we lived; *For God ſhall bring every work into Judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good or evil*, Eccleſ. 12. 14.

REFLECTIONS.

The Profane Perſon's Reflection.

1. This Meditation may be to me what the Hand-writing upon the Wall was to that profane Prince, *Dan.* 5. 5, 6. and a like effect it ſhould have upon me; for if all the actions of this Life be Seed ſown for the next, Lord, what a Crop, what a dreadful Harveſt am I like to have? How many Oaths and Curſes, Lies and vain Words, have I ſown with my Tongue? How have I wronged, oppreſſed, and over-reached in my Dealings? Ruſhed into all Profaneneſs, Drunkenneſs, Uncleanneſs, Sabbath-breaking, *&c. as the Horſe ruſheth into the battle*; and what ſhall I reap from ſuch Seed as this, but vengeance and fury? Theſe ſins ſeemed pleaſant in the Commiſſion, but O, how bitter will they be in their account? *What ſhall I do when God riſeth up? And when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him?* Job 31. 14. Is it not reaſonable and juſt, (O my Soul) that thou ſhouldeſt eat the fruit of thine own planting, and reap what thou haſt ſown? I thought nothing but profit and pleaſure would ſpring from my Luſts, but now I ſee 'tis a *Root* bearing Gall and Wormwood, *Deut.* 29. 18. Wretched Soul! What ſhall I do? If theſe actions be not, then am I, undone. I have been the Author of mine own Ruin, twiſted an Halter with mine own Fingers, for the Execution of mine own Soul! O, let me rather taſte the bitterneſs of ſin, by

by Repentance now, than enjoy its preſent pleaſures, which betray the Soul to endleſs wrath!

The Moral Man's Reflection.

2. How have I alſo been deceived in this matter? I verily thought that Glory and Immortality would have been the fruit and product of my Moral Honeſty and Righteouſneſs, that joy and peace had been ſeminally contained in thoſe actions; but now I ſee ſuch Fruit ſpring from no other Root but ſpecial Grace. Glory is diſcloſed from no other Bud but Holineſs. Alas! All my planting and ſowing was to little purpoſe, becauſe I ſowed not the right kind of Seed; the beſt Fruit I can expect from this, is but a leſſer degree of *Damnation*.

Deluded Soul, thy Seed is no better than what the *Moral Heathens* ſowed; and do I expect better Fruit than what they reaped? Civility without Chriſt, is but a freer Slavery; and Satan holds me as faſt in Captivity by this, as he doth the prophane by the pleaſure of their Luſts; either I muſt ſow better Seed, or look to reap bitter Fruit.

The Holy Soul's Reflection.

3. Mean while, bleſs the Lord (O my Soul) who inabled thee to ſow better Seed! Who kept thee watching, humbling thy ſelf, and praying, whilſt others have been Swearing, Drinking and Blaſpheming. This will yield thee the Fruit of Joy in the World to come; yea, it already yields preſent peace to thy Conſcience. Theſe Revenues are better than Gold, ſweeter than the Honey, and the Honey-comb; not that ſuch Fruits are meritoriouſly contained in theſe actions; I ſow to my ſelf in Righteouſneſs, but I reap in

Mercy, *Hoſ.* 10. 12. This is the way in which God will ſave and glorifie me. O then, let me be ever abounding in the work of the *Lord*, knowing that my labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.

The POEM.

'TWould be a ſtrange and monſtrous thing to ſee
Cherries, or Plumbs grow on an Apple-tree.
Whoever gather'd from the Thiſtle, Figs?
Or fruitful Grapes from off the worthleſs Twigs
Of pricking Thorns? In nature ſtill we find
All its Productions anſwering to their kind.
As are the Plants we ſet, or Seeds we ſow;
Such is the Fruit we ſhake, and Corn we mow.
And canſt thou think that from Corruptions root,
Thy Soul ſhall pluck the ſweet and pleaſant Fruit
Of ſpiritual Peace? Who ever that was wiſe,
Abus'd himſelf with ſuch abſurdities?
Look what you ſow, the very ſame you'll reap;
The Fruit of what you plant be ſure you'll eat.
How are they baffled by a ſubtle Devil,
That hope for Heaven, whilſt their ways are evil?
Such reaſonings here their credulous Souls beguile,
At which in other things themſelves would ſmile.
Our preſent Acts, though ſlightly paſſed by,
Are ſo much Seed ſown for Eternity.
The Seeds of Prayers, ſecret Groans and Tears,
Will ſhoot at laſt into the full blown Ears
Of Peace and Joy. Bleſſed are they that ſow
Beſide theſe Waters, *yea, thrice bleſt that go*
Bearing ſuch precious Seed; though now they mourn,
With Joyful Sheaves they ſhortly ſhall return.

Needs

Needs must the full ripe Fruits in Heaven be good,
When as the Seed was glory in the bud.
But O, the bitter, baneful Fruits of sin!
When all the pleasure Sinners have therein,
Like faded Blossoms to the ground shall fall,
Then they will taste the VVormwood and the Gall.
VVhat God and Conscience now of sin report,
You slight, and with their dreadful threatnings sport.
But he'll convince you then your ways were naught,
As Gideon *the men of* Succoth *taught.*
If Sermons cannot, Fire and Brimstone must
Teach men how good it is to pamper Lust.
VVhen Conscience takes thee by the Throat, and cries,
Now VVretch, now Sinner, thou that didst despise
My warnings; learn, and ever learning be
That Lesson, which thou ne'er wouldst learn of me.
The stoutest Sinner then would howl and roar,
O sin! I never saw thy face before.
Is this the Fruit of sin? Is this the place
VVhere I must lye? Is this indeed the case
Of my poor Soul! Must I be bound in Chains
VVith these Companions! Oh, is this the Gains
I get by sin? Poor VVretch! I that would never
See this before, am now undone for ever!

CHAP. XVIII.

Upon the Joy of Harveſt Men.

Great is the Joy of Harveſt Men, yet leſs
Than their's whom God doth with his favour bleſs.

OBSERVATION.

AMong all Earthly Joys, theſe four ſorts are noted in Scripture, as the moſt excellent and remarkable. (1.) *Nuptial Joys*; the day of Eſpouſals is the day of the gladneſs of a Man's Heart, *Cant.* 3. 11. (2.) *The Joy of Children*; Tho' now it ſeem but a common *Mercy* to moſt, and a burden to ſome, yet the people of God were wont to eſteem it a choice *Mercy*, and rejoyced greatly in it, *Joh.* 16. 21. there's joy that a Man is Born into the World. (3) *The Joy of Conqueſts and Victories*, when Men divide the Spoyl. And laſtly, *The Joy of Harveſt*; theſe two we find put together as principal Matters of joy, Iſa. 9. 3. *They joy before thee, according to the joy in Harveſt, and as men rejoyce when they divide the ſpoil.* The joy of Harveſt is no ſmall joy; *Gaudium meſſis, eſt meſſis gaudii*; the joy of Harveſt, is the Harveſt of their joy. 'Tis uſual with Men when they have reaped down their Harveſt, (or cut the Neck, as they call it) to demonſtrate their joy by ſhouting and loud acclamations.

APPLICATION.

THUS, and unſpeakably more than thus, do Saints rejoyce and ſhout for joy when they reap

reap the favour and love of God, for which they laboured in many a weary Duty. This Joy of Harveſt, as great as it is, and as much as carnal hearts are lifted up with it, is but a trifle, a thing of nought, compared with theirs; after they have ſown to themſelves in Righteouſneſs, and waited for the effects and returns of their Duties with Patience, and at laſt come to reap in Mercy, either the full Harveſt in Heaven, or but the Firſt-fruits of it on Earth, yet rejoyce, *With joy unſpeakable and full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. *This puts more gladneſs into their hearts, than when Corn and Wine increaſes*, Pſal. 4. 7. Carnal Joys are but Soul-Fevers, the Agues of the inner Man; there is a great difference betwixt the *unnatural Inflammations* of a Feveriſh Body which waſtes the Spirits, and drinks up the Radical moiſture; and the kindly well tempered heat of an healthy Body; and as much between the ſweet, ſerene and heavenly Joys, which flow from the Boſom of Chriſt into the hearts of aBelievers, and thoſe earthly delights which carnal hearts in a ſenſual way ſuck out of Creature-enjoyments. I will ſhew you the tranſcendency of ſpiritual Joys, above the Joy of Harveſt, in theſe eight Particulars following:

1. You that Joy with the Joy of Harveſt, are glad, becauſe now you have Food for your ſelves and Families to live upon all the year; but the Chriſtian rejoyceth, becauſe he hath Bread to eat that the World knows not of, *Rev.* 2. 17. Chriſt is the Food of his Soul, and his Fleſh is Meat indeed, and his Blood Drink indeed, *Joh.* 5. 55. (*i. e.*) the moſt real and excellent Food. You

read, *Psal.* 78. 25. that Man did eat Angels Food (*i. e.*) *Manna*, which was such excellent Bread, that if Angels did live upon material Food, this would be chosen for them; and yet this is but a type and dark shadow of *Jesus Christ*, the Food of Believers.

2. You rejoyce when your Harvest is in, because Corn is virtually many other things besides Food; you can turn it into Cloaths to keep you warm, and many other necessaries may be purchased by it: But yet it is not like *Christ*, the object of a Saint's Joy; though it answers many things, it doth not answer all things as *Christ* doth; turn it into what you will, it hath but a limited and respective usefulness: But *Jesus Christ* is all in all to Believers, and out of him their Faith can fetch all supplies; he is their *health* in *sickness*, their *strength* in *weakness*, their *ease* in *pain*, their *honour* in *reproach*, their *wealth* in *poverty*, their *Friend* in *Friendlessness*, their *habitation* when *harbourless*, their *enlargement* in *bonds*, the *strength* of their *hearts*, and *life* of their *life*. O, he is a full Christ, and whatever excellencies are scattered among all the Creatures, do meet all in him, and much more.

3. You rejoyce when you have gotten in your Harvest, because now you can free those Engagements, and pay those Debts which you have contracted. 'Tis a comfort to be out of Debt, and you may lawfully rejoyce that God gives you wherewith to quit your *Engagements*, that you may owe no Man any thing but love: But still the joy of Harvest falls short of the joy of Saints; for you rejoyce that you are, or have *wherewith* to help your selves

out

out of mens Debts: But they rejoyce that they are out of God's Debt; that his Book is cancelled, and their Sins pardoned; that by reason of the imputed Righteousness of Christ, the Law can demand nothing from them, *Rom.* 8. 1. O, what matter of Joy is this!

4. You rejoyce, because now your Corn is out of danger; all the while it was abroad it was in hazard, but now it's housed you fear not the *Rain*. But Christians rejoyce, not because their Corn is safe, but because their Souls are so. All the while they abode in an unregenerate state, they were every moment in danger of the storms of wrath; but now being in Christ, that danger is over; and what compare is there betwixt the safety of a little Corn and the security of an Immortall Soul?

5. Your Joy is but in a gift of common Providence; *Turks* and *Heathens* can rejoyce with your Joy; but the Joy of a Christian is a peculiar *favour* and gift of God. Corn is given to all Nations, even the most barbarous and wicked have store of it; but Christ is the portion but of a few, and those the dearly beloved of God. *Luther* said of the whole *Turkish Empire*, (where is the best and greatest store of Corn) that it is but a Crumb which the Master of the Family throws to the Dogs. He that had more Corn than his Barns could hold, now wants a drop of Water to cool his Tongue. Christ is a Gift bestow'd only upon God's Elect.

6. Your Joy will have an end; the time is coming, that when you have reaped down your Har-

veſts, your ſelves muſt be reaped down by death, and then you ſhall rejoyce in theſe things no more; but when your joy is ended, then is the joy of Saints perfected; they reap their Harveſt, when you leave your Harveſt; their Conſolation is everlaſting.

7. God can ſeparate your joy from theſe *Enjoyments* even while you have them, as well as when you leave them. 'Tis one thing for a man to have Riches and full Barns, and another thing to have comfort in them, *Eccleſ.* 5. 19, 20. But now the Joy of Chriſtians is a thing inſeparable from their enjoyment of *Chriſt*; Indeed the ſenſe of their intereſt may be loſt, and ſo the Acts of their Joy intermitted; but they always have it in the Seed, if not in the Fruit, *Pſal.* 97. 11. *Joy is ſown for the upright*; he hath it ſtill in the Principle, and in the Promiſe.

The Joy of Harveſtmen, for the moſt part, is only in their Harveſt, and in ſuch earthly things; take that away, and their Joy ceaſes. Earthly Hearts are acquainted with no higher Comforts; but the People of God can Joy in him, and take Comfort in their Earthly Injoyments too; and what Comfort they take in theſe things, is much more refined and ſweet than yours; for they enjoy all theſe things in God, and his love in giving them puts a ſweetneſs into them, that you are unacquainted with. Thus you ſee, how far your Joy falls ſhort of theirs.

A Reflection for one that hath a full Barn, but no Chriſt.

1. How have I rejoiced in a thing of nought, and pleaſed my ſelf with a vanity? God hath bleſſed me in my Fields, and in my Stores; but not with Spiritual Bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt. My Barns are full of Corn, but my Soul is empty of Grace; common Bounty hath given me a fulneſs of the things of this Life, but what if the meaning of it ſhould be to fat me for the day of ſlaughter? What if this be the whole of my Portion from the Lord? What if the Language of his Providences to my Soul ſhould be this? Lo, here I have given thee (with *Iſhmael*) the fatneſs of the Earth: Thou ſhalt not ſay, but thou haſt taſted of thy Creator's Bounty; but make the moſt of it, for this is all that ever thou ſhalt have from me: There be others in the World, to whom I have denied theſe things, but for them I have reſerved better; for the moſt part they are poor in this World, but rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom: Is not this enough to damp all my carnal Mirth? Should my Conſcience give me ſuch a *memento*, as *Abraham* in the Parable gave to *Dives*; *Remember that thou in thy life-time receiveſt thy good things.* Ah, what a cut would that be to all my Comforts? A Man in a Fever hath a lively Colour, but a dying Heart. I have an appearance, a ſhadow of Comfort, but a ſad ſtate of Soul.

2. Bleſſed

A Reflection for one that hath Christ, but no Barn.

2. *Blessed be the God, the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed me with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*, Eph. 1. 3. Though he hath not seen fit to give me much of this *World* in Hand, yet it hath pleased him to settle a Rich Inheritance upon me by Promise; the hopes and expectations whereof, yield my Soul more true Comfort, than all the present Enjoyments of this *World* could have done. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given me my portion in this Life, that by keeping me from the *Enjoyment*, hath also preserved me from the *Snares*, of a prosperous Estate.

Lord Jesus, I have no Bags, I have no Barns; but thou shalt be to me instead of those things. When others rejoyce in the fulness of their Earthly Comforts, I will rejoyce in the fulness of my Christ; they have that which (though I have not) I shall not want; and I have that which all their Riches cannot purchase. Bless the *Lord*, O my Soul!

A Reflection for one that hath a full Barn and Christ too.

But Lord, how am I obliged, above Thousands, to love and praise thee! To bless and admire thee, who hast not only plentifully provided for my Soul, but for my Body too. Who hast given me both the upper and the nether Springs, Heaven and Earth, things present, and things to come. Thou hast not dealt so with all, no, not with all of thy own People; many of them are Strangers to the Mercies which I enjoy. God hath done great things for me; O my Soul, What wilt thou do for God? The freer

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the condition is, he hath placed me in, the more am I both obliged and advantaged for his Service; and yet I doubt it will be found, that many a poor Christian that labours with his Hands to get his Bread, redeems more hours for God than I do. Lord, make me wise to understand and answer the double end of this gracious Dispensation! Let me bestow more of my time on God, and stand ready to minister to the Necessities of his People.

A Reflection for one that hath neither a Barn, nor a Christ.

4. Oh! What an unhappy Wretch am I! That have nothing either in hand, or in hope; am miserable here, and like to be so for ever! Had I but an Interest in Christ, as the godly poor have, that would *sweeten* all present troubles, and shew me the end of them. But alas! I am poor and wicked, contemned of Men, and abhorred of God; an object of contempt both to Heaven and Earth. Lord, look upon such a truly miserable Object with Compassion, give me a portion with thy people in the World to come, if thou never better my outward condition here! O sanctifie this poverty! Bless these straits and wants, that they may necessitate my Soul to go to Christ; make this poverty the way to glory, and I shall bless thee to Eternity that I was poor in this World.

The POEM.

OFT have I seen when Harvest's almost in;
The last Load coming, how some Men have been
Rapt up with joy, as if that welcome Cart
Drew home the very treasure of their Heart. What

What joyful ſhoutings! hooping! hollowing noiſe,
With mingled voices both of Men and Boys?
To carnal minds there is no greater mirth,
No higher joy, nor greater heaven on earth.
He ſpeakes pure Paradoxes, that ſhall ſay
Theſe are but trifles to what Saints enjoy.
But they deſpiſe your ſparks, as much as you
Contemn their Sun. Some that could never ſhew
A full ſtuft Barn, on which you ſet your heart;
But glean perhaps the ears behind your Cart:
Yet are the gleanings of their comfort more
Than all your Harveſt, and admired ſtore.
Your mirth is mixt with ſorrow, theirs is pure,
Yours like a ſhadow fleets, but theirs endure.
God gives to you the huſk, to them the pith;
And no heart-ſtinging ſorrows adds therewith.
Though at the Gates of death they ſometimes mourn,
No ſooner doth the Lord to them return,
But ſorrow's baniſht from their penſive Breaſt;
Joy triumphs there, and ſmiles their Cheeks inveſt.
Have you beheld when with perfumed wings,
Out of the balmy Eaſt bright Phœbus *ſprings;*
Mounting th' Olympick *Hill, with what a Grace*
He views the throne of Darkneſs; and doth chaſe
The ſhades of night before him? Having hurl'd
His golden Beams about this lower world,
How from ſad Groves, and ſolitary Cells,
Where horrid darkneſs and confuſion dwells,
Batts, Owls, and doleful Creatures fly away,
Reſigning to the cheerful Birds of day,
Who in thoſe places now can ſit and chant,
Where lately ſuch ſad creatures kept their haunt.
Thus grief reſigns to Joy; ſighs, groans and tears
To ſongs triumphant when the Lord appears.

natchleſs Joy! O countenance divine!
at are thoſe trifles, to theſe ſmiles of thine!
ay I with poor Mephiboſheth *be bleſt*
th theſe ſweet ſmiles, let Ziba *take the reſt.*
y Life, my Treaſure, thou ſhalt ne'er be ſold
r Silvers Hill, or Rivers pav'd with Gold.
er't thou but known to worldlings, they would ſcorn
ſtoop their hearts to ſuch poor things as Corn;
r ſo they do, becauſe thou art above
at ſphere wherein their low conceptions move.

CHAP. XIX.

Upon the Thraſhing out of Corn.

More ſolid Grain with greater ſtrength you thraſh,
The ableſt Chriſtians have the hardeſt laſh.

OBSERVATION.

HUsbandmen having to do with divers *ſorts* of Grain, ſome more tough and ſtubborn, others more free and tender, do not beat all alike in the Threſhing-floor; but as they have Threſhals of ſeveral ſizes, ſo they beſtow on ſome *Grain* more, on others fewer ſtrokes, according to the *different* qualities of the Grain to be threſhed. This obſervation the Prophet *Iſaiah* hath, *chap.* 28. *v.* 27. *The Fitches are not threſhed with a threſhing inſtrument, niether is the Cart-wheel turn'd about upon the Cummin, but the Fitches are beaten out with a ſtaff, and the Cummin with a rod.* The manner of beating out the Corn in ancient times, was far differ-

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rent from that which is now in use among us; they had the Cart-wheel, which was full of Iron Spokes or Teeth, and the Hoofs of Beasts for the Harder sort of Grain, as Wheat, Rye and Barly; a Staff or Flail for the Fitches, and a Rod or Twig for the Cummin; all which Instruments were Proportioned according the the nature of the Grain.

APPLICATION.

GOd having to do in a way of Correction with divers sorts of Offenders, doth not use the like severity with them all, but proportions his Correction to their abilities and strength. *Jer.* 30. 11. I will not make a full end of thee. but will [correct thee in measure] and will not leave thee altogether unpunished, (*q. d.*) afflicted thou must be, my respect to my own glory and thy good puts a necessity upon that; but yet I will do it moderately, I will not lay on without measure or mercy, as I intend to do upon the Enemies; but will mete out your sufferings in a due proportion: even as a careful Physician, in prescribing Pills or Potions to his Patient, hath regard as well to the ability of the Patient, as to the nature and quality of the Disease; even so thy God, O *Israel*, will not afflict thee according to the greatness of his power and his wrath answerable thereunto, *Psal.* 90. 11. that would break thee to pieces, *Psal.* 78. 38. Nor yet will he afflict thee according to the demerit of thy sin. As it shall be much less than what I could inflict; so it shall be less than thine iniquities deserve, *Ezra.* 9. 13. Neither my power, nor thy desert, shall be the rule of my proceedings;

ceedings; but I will do it with moderation and mercy, as thou art able to bear. I that have instructed the Husbandman to proportion his Instruments to the quality of the Grain before him, will exercise the like wisdom and mildness towards thee. And the similitude betwixt the Husbandman's threshing his Corn, and the Lord's afflicting his People, stands in these Particulars.

1. The Husbandman's end in threshing the Corn, is to separate it from the Husks and Chaff; and God's end in afflicting his People, is to separate them from their sins, *Isa.* 27. 9. In measure when it shooteth forth, he will debate with it, (*i. e.*) he will moderately correct them; and what the end of those Corrections are, the next words informs us; *By this therefore shall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin.* God uses Afflictions, as we use Soap, to cleanse away filthiness, and fetch out spots, *Dan.* 11.35. he aims not at the Destruction of their Persons, but of their Lusts.

2. If the Husbandman have Cockle, Darnel, or pernicious Tares before him in the Floor among his Corn, he little regards whether it be bruised and batter'd to pieces by the Threshold or no; 'tis a worthless thing, and he spares it not. Such Cockle and Tares are the Enemies of God; and when these come under his Flail, he strikes them without Mercy; for these the Lord prepares a new sharp threshing Instrument, having Teeth, which shall beat them to dust, Isa. 41.15. *The daughter of* Babylon *is like a Threshing-floor, 'tis time to thresh her*, Jer. 51. 33. And when that time is come, then (in allusion

alluſion to the Beaſt that was to tread out the Corn) Sion's *horn ſhall be of Iron, and her hoofs braſs*, Mic. 4. 13. He ſmites not his People, according to the ſtroke of them that ſmote them; the meaning is, his ſtrokes on them ſhall be deadly ſtrokes. They ſhewed no Mercy to *Sion*, and God will ſhew no Mercy to them.

3. When the Husks and Chaff are perfectly ſeparated from the Grain, then the Husbandman beats it no more. When God hath perfectly purged and ſeparated the ſins of his people, then *affliction* ſhall come to a perpetual end, he will never ſmite them again; there is no noiſe of the threſhing Inſtrument in Heaven; he that beat them with his Flail on Earth, will put them into his Boſom in Heaven.

4. Tho' the Husbandman lays on, and beats his Corn, as if he were angry with it, yet he loves and highly prizes it; and though God ſtrike and afflict his People, yet he ſets a great value upon them; and it is equally abſurd to infer God's hatred to his People from his afflicting of them, as the Husbandman's hatred of his Corn, becauſe he threſhes and beats it, Heb. 12. 6. *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, and chaſteneth every ſon whom he receiveth.*

5. Tho' the Husbandman threſh and beat the Corn, yet he will not bruiſe or hurt it, if he can help it; though ſome require more and harder ſtrokes than others, yet none ſhall have more than it can endure. And tho' the Lord afflict his Servants, yet he will do them no hurt, *Jer.* 25. 6. Some need more Rods than others, but none ſhall have more than they can bear; the Lord knows

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he meaſures and degrees of his Servants Faith nd Patience, and accordingly ſhall their Tryals e, *Pſal.* 103. 13, 14. *Like as a Father pities his hildren, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for e knows their frame, he remembers they are but duſt; e makes a way to eſcape, that they may be able to ear it*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. This care and tenderneſs f God over his afflicted, is eminently diſcovered n three Particulars.

(1.) In not expoſing them to, till he have prepared them for their Tryals, Luk. 24. 49. *Tarry e at Jeruſalem, until ye be endued with power from n high.* He gives them ſometimes eminent diſcoveries of his love immediately before, and as a Preparative to their Sufferings; in the ſtrength whereof, they are carried through all.

(2.) Or if not ſo, then he intermixeth ſupporting Comfort with their Troubles, as you ſometimes ſee the Sun ſhine out while the Rain falls. 'Twas ſo with *Paul*, Acts 27. 23. *This night* (and it was a ſad night indeed) *there ſtood by me the Angel of the Lord, whoſe I am.*

(3.) In taking off the Affliction, when they can bear it no longer, 1 Cor. 10. 13. *He makes a way to eſcape, that they may be able to bear it*, Pſal. 125. 3. The Rod is taken off, *when the righteous is even ready to put forth his hand to iniquity.* 'Tis a *Jewiſh* Proverb, When the Bricks are doubled, then comes *Moſes*. And it is a Chriſtian experience, When the Spirit is ready to fail, then comes *Jeſus*; according to that Promiſe, *Iſa.* 57. 16.

REFLE-

REFLECTIONS.

A Reflection for Persecutors.

1. How unlike am I to God, in the afflicting of his People? The Lord is pitiful when he smites them, but I have been cruel. He is kind to them, when most severe; but the best of my kindnesses to them, may fitly enough be called severity. God smites them in love, I have smitten them in hatred. Ah, What have I done? God hath used me as his hand, *Psal.* 17. 14. or as his Rod to afflict them, *Jer.* 10. 7. but his end and mine have widely differed in that action, *Isa.* 10.7. I am but the Scullion, or rather the Whisp to scour and cleanse these Vessels of Glory, and when I have done that dirty work, those bright Souls shall be set up in Heaven, and I cast into the Fire. If he shall have Judgment without Mercy, that shewed no Mercy; How can I expect Mercy from the Lord, whose People I have persecuted mercilesly for his sake?

A Reflection for such as meet with no Afflictions.

2. Is the Lord's Wheat thus threshed in the *floor* of *Afflictions?* What then shall I think of my condition, who prosper and am let alone in the way of sin? Surely the Lord looks on me as on a Weed, and not as his Corn; and 'tis too probable, that I am rather reserved for burning, than threshing. Some there are whom God loves not so well as to spend a *Rod* upon them, but saith, *Let them alone*, Hos. 4. 17. but miserable is their condition, notwithstanding their impunity, *For* what is the interpretation but this? I will come to a reckoning with them for altogether in Hell. *Lord*, how much better is thy afflicting Mercy, than thy

thy ſparing ſeverity! Better is the condition of an afflicted Child, than of a rejected Baſtard, *Heb.* 12. 7. O, let me rather feel thy Rod now, as the Rod of a loving *Father*, than feel thy Wrath hereafter, as the Wrath of an Omnipotent Avenger.

A Reflection for an Afflicted Saint.

3. Well then, deſpond not, O my Soul! Thou heareſt the Husbandman loves his Corn, tho' he threſheth it; and ſurely the Lord loves thee not the leſs, becauſe he afflicts thee ſo much. If Affliction then be the way to Heaven, bleſſed be God for Affliction. The threſhing ſtrokes of God have come thick upon me, by which I may ſee, what a tough and ſtubborn Heart I have; if one ſtroke would have done the work, he would not have lifted up his hand the ſecond time. I have not had a ſtroke more than I had need of, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. and by this means he will purge my ſin, bleſſed be God for that. The Damned have infinitely more, and harder ſtrokes than I, and yet their ſin ſhall never be ſeparated by their ſufferings. Ah, ſin, curſed ſin, I am ſo much out of love with thee, that I am willing to endure more than all this to be well rid of thee; all this I ſuffer for thy ſake, but the time is coming when I ſhall be rid of ſin and ſuffering together. Mean while, I am under my own Father's Hand, ſmite me he may, but hate me he cannot.

The POEM.

THE *ſacred Records tell us, heretofore*
God had an Altar in a Threſhing-floor;

Where

Where threshing Instruments devoted were
To sacred Service, so you find them here.
I now would teach the Thresher to beat forth
A notion from his Threshold much more worth
Than all his Corn; and make him understand
That Soul-instructing Engine in his hand.
With fewer strokes and lighter will you beat
The Oates and Barley than the stubborn Wheat,
Which will require and endure more blows
Than freer Grain: Thus deals the Lord by those
Whom he afflicts. He doth not use to strike
Offending Children with his Rod alike;
But on the ablest Shoulders doth impose
The heaviest Burdens, and the less on those
Of weaker Grace. He shews himself a God
Of Judgments in his handling of the Rod.
God hath a Rate-book by him, wherein he
Keeps just accounts how rich his People be;
What Faith, Experience, Patience, more or less,
Each one possesseth, and doth them assess
According to their stock. Such as have not
A Martyrs Faith, shall have no Martyrs lot.
The kinds, degrees, and the continuance
Of all their Sufferings to a Circumstance,
Prescribed are by him, who wisely sways
The World, and more than's right on no Man lays.
Be Man, or Devil, the Apothecary,
God's the Physician; Who can then miscarry
In such a hand? He never did, or will
Suffer the least Addition to his Bill.
Nor measure, nor yet mercy he observes
In threshing Babylon, *for she deserves*
His heaviest strokes; and in his floor she must
Be beaten shortly with his flail to Dust.

But Sion's *God, in meaſure, will debate,*
His Children he may ſmite, but cannot hate.
He beats them, true, to make their Chaff to fly,
That they, like purged Golden Grains, may lye
In one fair heap, with thoſe bleſs'd Souls that here
Once in like manner thraſh'd, and winnowed were.

CHAP. XX.

Upon the Winnowing of Corn.

The Fan doth cauſe light Chaff to fly away,
So ſhall th'ungodly in God's winnowing day.

OBSERVATION.

WHen the Corn is threſhed out in the Floor, where it lyes mingled with empty ears, and worthleſs Chaff, the Husbandman carries it out altogether into ſome open place, where having ſpread his ſheet for the Preſervation of the Grain, he expoſes it all to the Wind; the good, by reaſon of its ſolidity, remains upon the ſheet, but the Chaff, being light and empty, is partly carried quite away by the Wind, and all the reſt ſeparated from the good Grain into a diſtinct heap, which is carried away, either to the Fire or the Dunghil, as a worthleſs thing.

APPLICATION.

MEn have their winnowing Days, and God hath his; a day to ſeparate the Chaff from the

the Wheat, the godly from the ungodly, who shall be held up to the Wind, but only the wicked shall be driven away by it. Such a day God hath in this World, wherein he winnows his Wheat and separates the Chaff. There is a double fanning or winnowing of Men here in this World; one is *doctrinally*, in which sense I understand that Scripture, *Mat.* 3. 12. spoken of Christ, when he was entring upon his Ministerial Work. *His fan is in his hand, and he shall throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the Chaff with unquenchable fire.* The preaching of the Gospel is as a Fan in Christ's Hand, and it is as much as if *John* had thus told the *Jews*; that tho' there were many hypocritical ones among them, that had now a place and name among the People of God, and gloried in their Church-priviledges, yet there is a purging blast of truth coming, which shall make them fly out of the Church as fast as Chaff out of the Floor. Thus Christ winnows or fans the World *doctrinally*. The other is *judicially*, by bringing sore and grievous tryals and sufferings upon the Churches, for this very end, that those which are but Chaff, (*i. e*) empty and vain Professors, may, by such Winds as these be, separated from his People.

The Church increases two ways, and by two divers means; *extensively*, in breadth and numbers, and *intensively*, in vigour and power; peace and prosperity causes the first, sufferings and adversity the last; and well may a day of Persecution be called a winnowing day, for then are the People of *God* tossed to purpose, as Corn in the Sieve, though

nothing

nothing but Chaff be lost thereby. Of such a winnowing day the Prophet speaks, *Amos* 9. 9. 10. *I will sift the house of* Israel *among all nations, like as Corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth; all the sinners of my people shall die.* (*q. d.*) I will cause great agitations and tossings among you by the hands of the *Assyrians* and *Babylonians*, into whose Countreys you shall be dispersed and scattered; yet I will so govern those your dispersions by my *Providence*, that not one good grain, one upright Soul, shall eternally perish; but the sinners of my *People*, the refuse stuff, That shall perish.

To the same purpose speaks another Prophet, *Zeph.* 1. 1, 2. *Gather your selves together*, (or as some read) *fan your selves*, yea, fan your selves, *before the decree bring forth, and the day pass as the Chaff.* He doth not mean, that the time shall pass as the Chaff, but there is a day of affliction and distress coming, in which the wicked shall pass as the Chaff before the Wind; and yet notwithstanding, all these winnowings upon Earth, much Chaff will still abide among the Corn; therefore God hath appointed another day for the winnowing of the World, even the day of Judgment, in reference to which it is said, *Psal.* 1 4, 5. *The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away; therefore the ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*; (*i. e.*) God hath a day wherein he will sift the World, like Corn in a Sieve, and then the wicked shall appear to be but Chaff, which God will eternally separate from his Wheat. I will not strain the similitude, but fairly display it in these Seven Particulars.

1. The Chaff and Wheat grow together in the ſame Field, and upon the ſame Root and Stalk. In this, wicked Men are like Chaff, who not only aſſociate with the people of God, but oftentimes ſpring up with them in the ſame Families, and from the ſame Root, or immediate Parents, *Mal.* 1. 2. *Was not* Eſau Jacob's *brother?* Yet the one was Wheat, the other Chaff. Inſtances of this are infinite.

2. The Husbandman would never endure the Husks, Chaff, and dry Stalks to remain in the Field, if it were not for the good Corns ſake, he would quickly ſet fire to it, but that the Corn is *among* it, which he highly prizeth; and be aſſured, God would never ſuffer the wicked to abide long in this World, were it not for his own Elect that are diſperſed among them. Except the Lord had *ſuch* a Remnant diſperſed in the World, he would quickly ſet fire to the four Quarters, and make it like *Sodom*, Iſa. 1. 9.

3. The Chaff is a very worthleſs thing, the *Husbandman* cares not what becomes of it, and of as little worth are wicked Men, *Prov.* 10. 20. *The heart of the wicked is little worth.* The Heart is the principal Part of the Man, and yet that's but Chaff, no worth in it; his Lands, his Cloaths, *&c.* are worth ſomewhat, but his Heart is worth nothing.

4. Though Chaff in it ſelf be nothing worth, *yet*, it is of ſome uſe to the Corn whiles 'tis ſtanding in the Field; the ſtalk bears up the ear, and the Chaff covers the Grain, and defends it from the injury of the Weather. Thus God makes wicked Men of uſe to his people, in outward ſociety; they help

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to ſupport and protect them in this Word, *Rev.* 12. 16. The Earth helped the Woman, (*i. e.*) worldly Men for carnal ends helpt the Church, when a Flood of perſecution was poured out. The Church often helps the World, it receives many benefits from the people of God; and ſometimes God over-rules the World to help his Church.

5. When the Chaff and Wheat are both brought forth and held up to the Wind in one Sieve, they fall two ways; the Wheat falls down upon the Floor or Sheet, the Chaff is carried quite away: So although for a time godly and ungodly abide together, yet, when this winnowing time comes, God's Wheat ſhall be gathered into his Garner in Heaven, the Chaff ſhall go the other way, *Mat.* 3. 12.

6. If there be any Chaff among the Corn, it will appear when it is ſifted in a windy day, it cannot poſſibly eſcape if it be well winnowed; much more impoſſible it is for any wicked man to eſcape the critical ſearch of God in that day; the cloſeſt Hypocrite ſhall then be detected, for God will judge the ſecrets of men, 2 *Cor.* 16. *He will then bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the counſels of the heart*, 1 Cor. 4. 5.

7. Laſtly, After Corn and Chaff are ſeparated by the winnowing Wind, they ſhall never lye together in one heap any more. The wicked ſhall ſee *Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, but themſelves thruſt out; there is no Chaff in Heaven.

REFLECTIONS.

A Reflection for a cloſe Hypocrite.

1. Am I an empty vain Profeſſor, that want the Pith and ſubſtance of real godlineſs? Then am I but Chaff in God's account, though I grow among his Corn; the Eye of Man cannot diſcern my Hypocriſie, but when he comes whoſe Fan is in his Hand, then how plainly will it be detected? Angels and Men ſhall diſcern it, and ſay, *Lo, this is the Man that made not God his hope*; how ſhall I abide the day of his coming? Chriſt is the great Heart-Anatomiſt; things ſhall not be carried then by Names and parties, as they are now; every one ſhall be weighed in a Juſt ballance, and a *Mene Tekel*; written upon every falſe Heart; great will be the perſpicuity of that trial: My own conſcience ſhall joyn with my Judge, and ſhall then acknowledge, that there is not one drop of Injuſtice in all that Sea of wrath; and though I am Damned, yet I am not wronged; the Chaff cannot ſtand before the Wind, nor I before the Judgment of Chriſt.

A Reflection for one that neglects Self-examination.

2. Is there ſuch a fanning time coming? Why do not I then ſift my Heart every day by ſerious Self-examination? No work more important to me, and yet how much have I neglected it? O my Soul! thou hadſt been better imployed, in ſearching thine own Eſtate in reference to that day, than in prying ſinfully into the Hearts, and cenſuring the Conditions of other Men: Judge thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt not be condemned with the World; the work indeed is difficult, but the neglect dangerous: Were I within a few days to *ſtand*

at

at Man's Bar, there to be tryed for my Life, how busie should I be every hour of the day in writing to any that I thought could befriend me? And studying every advantage to my self? And yet, what a vast difference is there betwixt Man's Bar and God's? Betwixt a tryal for my Life, and for my Soul? Lord, rouze up my sluggish Heart by awful and solicitous thoughts of that day, lest I be found among that Chaff which shall be burnt up with unquenchable Fire!

A Reflection for a Sincere Soul.

3. Fear not, O my Soul! though there be a blast coming which shall drive all the Chaff into Hell, yet it shall blow thee no harm. *I know that when he hath tryed me, I shall come forth as Gold*, Job 23. 10. I confess I have too much Chaff about me, but yet I am not altogether Chaff; there is a solid work of Grace upon my Soul that will abide the Trial: Let the Judgment to come be as impartial and exact as it's possible to be, yet a Grain of Sincerity cannot be lost in it; *for God will not cast away a perfect* (*i. e.* an upright-hearted) *man*, Job 8. 20. He that's appointed to Judge the World is mine; and his imputed Righteousness will make me full weight in the Balance. Bless the Lord (O my Soul) for sincerity; this will abide, when common Gifts, and empty Names, will flee as the Chaff before the Wind.

The POEM.

THE winnowing Wind first drives the Chaff away,
Next light and hollow Grains; those only stay
Whose weight and solid substance can endure
This tryal, and such Grains are counted pure.

The Corn for uſe is careſully preſerv'd,
The uſeleſs Chaff for burning flames reſerv'd.
No Wind but blows ſome good, *a Proverb is,*
Glad ſhall I be if it hold true in this.
O, that the Wind when you to winnowing go,
This ſpiritual good unto your Souls might blow!
To make you pauſe, and ſadly ruminate,
In what a doleful plight and wretched ſtate
Their Souls are in, who cannot hope to ſtand
When he ſhall come, whoſe Fan is in his hand.
His piercing Eyes infallibly diſcloſe
The very Reins, and inward parts of thoſe
Whoſe outſide ſeeming Grace ſo neatly paints,
That with the beſt they paſs for real Saints.
No Hypocrite with God acceptance finds,
But like the Chaff, diſpers'd by furious Winds:
Their guilt ſhall not that ſearching day endure,
Nor they approach th' Aſſemblies of the pure.
Have you obſerv'd in Autumn, Thiſtle-down
By howling Eolus *ſcatter'd up and down*
About the Fields? Even ſo God's ireful ſtorm
Shall chaſe the Hypocrite, who now can ſcorn
The breath of cloſe reproofs; and like a Rock
Repel reproofs, and juſt reprovers mock.
How many that in ſplendid Garments walk,
Of high Profeſſions! and like Angels talk,
Shall God diveſt, and openly proclaim
Their ſecret guilt, to their eternal ſhame!
This is the day wherein the Lord will rid
His Church of thoſe falſe Friends, which now lye hid
Among his people. There will not be one
Falſe heart remain, to loſe our Love upon.
O, bleſs'd Aſſembly! Glorious ſtate! when all
In their Uprightneſs walk, and ever ſhall,

O

O, make my heart ſincere, that I may never
Prove ſuch light Chaff as then thy Wind will ſever
From ſolid Grain? O let my Soul deteſt
Unſoundneſs, and abide thy ſtricteſt Teſt.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND PART OF Husbandry.

HOw is it Reader? have I tired thee? (with me,
Whilſt thro' theſe pleaſant Fields thou walk'ſt
Our path was pleaſant, but if length of ſway
Do weary thee, we'll ſlack our pace, and ſtay;
Let's ſit a while, under the cooling ſhade
Of fragrant Trees; Trees were for ſhadow made.
Lo here a pleaſant Grove, whoſe ſhade is good;
But more than ſo, 'twill yield us fruit for food.
No dangerous fruits do on theſe branches grow,
No Snakes among the verdant Graſs below.
Here we'll repoſe a while, and then go view
The pleaſant Herds and Flocks; and ſo adieu.

CHAP. I.

Upon the Ingraffing of Fruit-Trees.

Ungrafted Trees can never bear good Fruit,
Nor we, till grafted on a better Root.

OBSERVATION.

A Wild Tree naturally ſpringing up in the Wood or Hedge, and never grafted or removed from its native Soyl, may bear ſome Fruit, and that fair and beautiful to the Eye; but it will give you no content at all in eating, being always harſh, ſower and unpleaſant to the taſte; but if ſuch a ſtock be removed into a good Soyl, and grafted with a better kind, it may become a good Tree, and yield ſtore of choice and pleaſant Fruit.

APPLICATION.

UNregenerate Men, who never were acquainted with the Myſtery of Spiritual Union with Jeſus Chriſt, but ſtill grow upon their natural Root, old *Adam*, may by the force and power of natural Principles bring forth ſome Fruit, (which like the wild Hedge-fruit we ſpake of) may indeed be fair and pleaſant to the Eyes of Men, but God takes no pleaſure at all in it; it's ſower, harſh, and diſtaſteful to him, becauſe it ſprings not from the Spirit of Chriſt, *Iſa.* 1. 13. *I cannot away with it, it is iniquity*, &c. But that I may not intangle the Thread of my Diſcourſe, I ſhall (as in the former Chapters) ſet before you a parallel betwixt the beſt Fruits.

Fruits of natural men, and those of a wild ungrafted Tree.

1. The Root that bears this wild Fruit is a degenerate *Root*, and that's the cause of all this sowerness and harshness in the *Fruit* it bears; it's the Seed of some better Tree accidentally blown, or cast into some waste and bad Soyl, where not being manured and ordered aright, it's turned wild: So all the Fruits of unregenerate men flow from the first *Adam*, a corrupt and degenerate Root; he was indeed planted a right Seed, but soon turned a wild and degenerate Plant; he being the Root from which every man naturally springs, corrupts all the Fruit that any man bears from him. It's observed by *Gregory*, pertinent to my present *Purpose*, *Genus humanum in parente primo, velut in radice putruit?* Mankind was putrified in the Root of his first Parent. *Mat.* 7. 18. *A corrupt Tree cannot bring forth good fruit.*

This corrupt *Root* spoils the Fruit, by the transmission of its sower and naughty Sap into all the Branches and Fruits that grow on them; they suck no other nourishment, but what the Root affords them, and that being bad spoils all: For the same cause and reason, no meer natural or unregenerate man can ever do one holy or acceptable action, because the corruption of the *Root* is in all those actions. The necessity of our drawing corruption into all our actions, from this cursed Root, *Adam*, is expressed by a quick and smart Interrogation, *Job* 14. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.* The sense of it is well delivered us (by Mr. *Caryl in loc.*) This question (saith he) may

undergo a threefold Conſtruction; Firſt, Thus: Who can bring a morally clean Perſon, out of a Perſon originally unclean? And ſo he lays his *Hand* upon his Birth-ſin. Or, Secondly, (which ſpeaks to my purpoſe) it may refer to the Action of the ſame Man, Man being unclean, cannot bring forth a clean thing; (*i. e.*) a clean or holy Action; that which is originated, is like its original. And that this ſower Sap of the firſt ſtock (I mean *Adam*'s ſin) is tranſmitted into all Mankind, not only corrupting their Fruit, but ruining and withering all the Branches; the Apoſtle ſhews us in that excellent parallel betwixt the two *Adams*, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man* [one, not only *in individuo*, *ſed in ſpecie*, one repreſenting the whole Root or Stock,] *ſin entred into the world*. Not by imitation only, but by propagation; and this brought Death and Ruin upon all the Branches.

3. Although theſe wild *Hedge-fruits* be unwholſom and unpleaſant to the taſte, yet they are fair and beautiful to the Eye; a Man that looks upon them, and doth not know what Fruit it is, would judge it by its ſhew and colour to be *excellent Fruit*, for it makes a fairer ſhew oftentimes than the beſt and moſt wholeſom Fruit doth: Even ſo, thoſe natural *Gifts* and *Endowments* which ſome unregenerate Perſons have, ſeem exceeding fair to the Eye, and a Fruit to be deſired. What excellent qualities have ſome meer natural men and women? What a winning *Affability*, humble *Condeſcention*, *Meekneſs*, *Righteouſneſs*, ingenious *Tenderneſs* and *Sweetneſs* of *Nature*! As it was (Hyperbolically enough) ſaid of one, *In hoc homine, non peccavit Adam*;

Adam; *Adam* never ſinned in this Man; meaning that he excelled the generality of *Adam*'s *Children* in ſweetneſs of Temper and natural Endowments. What curious Phantaſies, nimble Wits, ſolid Judgments, tenacious Memories, rare Elocution, *&c.* are to be found among meer natural Men? By which they are aſſiſted in diſcourſing, praying, preaching and writing to the Admiration of ſuch as know them! *But that which is highly eſteemed of men, is abomination to God, Luke* 16. 15. It finds no acceptance with him, becauſe it ſprings from that curſed Root of Nature, and is not the Production of his own Spirit.

4. If ſuch a ſtock were removed into a better Soyl, and graffed with a better Kind, it might bring forth Fruit, pleaſant and grateful to the Huſbandman; and if ſuch Perſons (before deſcribed) were but regenerated and changed in their Spirits and Principles, what excellent and uſeful Perſons would they be in the Church of God? And then their Fruits would be ſweet and acceptable to him. One obſerves of *Tertullian*, *Origen* and *Jerom*, that they came into *Canaan* laden with *Egyptian* Gold, (*i. e.*) they came into the Church full of excellent humane Learning, which did Chriſt much Service.

5. When the Husbandman cuts down his *Woods* or *Hedges*, he cuts down theſe Crab-ſtocks with the reſt, becauſe he values them not any more than the Thorns and Brambles among which they *grow*; and as little will God regard or ſpare theſe natural Branches, how much ſoever they are laden with ſuch Fruit. The threatning is univerſal,

John,

3. 3. *Except you be regenerate and born again, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And again, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Without holiness, no Man* (be his natural Gifts never so excellent) *shall see God.* Imbellished nature, is nature still; *That which is born of the flesh, is but flesh,* however it be set off with advantage to the Eye of Man.

REFLECTIONS.

A Reflection for an Accomplished Naturalist.

1. To what purpose then do I glory in my natural Accomplishments? Though I have a better nature than some others have, yet it is a cursed nature still. These sweet Qualities and excellent Gifts do only hide, but not kill the Corruption of Nature. I am but a rotten Post gilded over, and all my Duties but Hedge-fruit, which God makes no account of. O cutting thought! That the *unlearned* shall rise and take *Heaven*, when I with all my excellent Gifts shall descend into Hell. Heaven was not made for Scholars, as such, but for Believers; as one said, when they comforted him upon his *Death-bed*, that he was a knowing man, a *Doctor of Divinity*: O, said he, I shall not appear before God as a *Doctor*, but as a Man; I shall stand upon a level with the most Illiterate in the Day of Judgment; what doth it avail me that I have a nimble Wit, whilst I have none to do my self good? Will my Judge be charm'd with a Rhetorical *Tongue?* Things will not be carried in that World as they are in this. If I could with *Berengarius* discourse *de omni scibile*, of every thing that is knowable; or with *Solomon* unravel Nature, from the *Cedar* to the *Hyssop*, what would this advantage me,

me, as long as I am ignorant of Christ, and the *Mystery* of Regeneration? My head hath often aked with Study, but when did my Heart ake for Sin? Methinks, O my Soul, thou trimmest up thy self in these natural Ornaments to appear before God, much as that delicate *Agag* did, when he was to come before *Samuel*, and fondly conceitest that *these* things will procure favour or (at least) pity from him; but yet, think not for all that, *the bitterness of Death is past*; say not within thy self, Will God cast such a one as I into Hell? Shall a man of such Parts be Damned? Alas! Justice will hew thee to pieces, as *Samuel* did that spruce King, and not abate thee the least, for these things; many Thousand Branches of Nature, as fair and fruitful as thy self, are now blazing in Hell, because not transplanted by Regeneration into Christ; and if he spared not them, neither will he spare thee.

A Reflection for a true, but weak Believer.

2. I am a poor despised Shrub, which have no beauty at all in me, and yet such a one hath the *Lord chosen* to transplant into Christ, whilst he left many fragrant Branches standing on their native stock, to be fuel of his wrath to all *Eternity*! O Grace! For ever to be admired! Ah, what cause have I to be thankful to free Grace, and for ever to walk humbly with my God; the Lord hath therefore chosen an unlikely, rugged, unpolisht Creature as I am, that Pride may for ever be hid from mine Eyes, and that I may never glory in his presence, 1 *Cor.* 1. 29. I now have the advantage of a better Root and Soyl than any carnal Person hath, it will therefore be a greater shame to me, and

and a reproach to the Root that bears me, if I should be out-ſtript and excelled by them; yet Lord, how often do I find it ſo? I ſee ſome of them meek and patient, whilſt I am proud and paſſionate; gentle and affable, whilſt I am rough and ſurly; generous and noble, whilſt I am baſe and penurious. Truly, ſuch a Branch as I am, is no honour to the Root that bears it.

The POEM.

I Am a branch of that fair Eden *Tree,*
Which to Mankind God had ordain'd to be,
The common Stock, his Scituation good,
His Branches many, of himſelf a Wood.
And like a Cedar by the River fed,
Unto the Clouds his ample Branches ſpread.
Sin ſmote his Root, then Juſtice cut him down;
And levell'd with the Earth his lofty Crown.
What hope of Branches when the Tree's o'return'd?
But like dry Faggots to be bound and burn'd.
It had been ſo, had not tranſcendent love,
Which in a ſphear above our thoughts doth move,
Prepar'd a better ſtock to ſave, and nouriſh,
Tranſplanted Twigs, which in him thrive and flouriſh.
In Adam *all are curs'd, no ſaving Fruit*
Shall ever ſpring from that ſin-blaſted Root:
Yea all the branches that in him are found,
How flouriſhing ſoever, muſt be bound
And pil'd together, horrid news to tell!
To make an everlaſting blaze in Hell.
God takes no Pleaſure in the ſweeteſt Bud
Diſcloſ'd by Nature, for the Root's not good:
Some Boughs indeed richly adorned are
With natural Fruits, which to the Eye are fair:

Rare

re Gifts, ſweet Diſpoſitions, which attracts
he Love of Thouſands, and from moſt exacts
onour and Admiration. You'll admire
hat ſuch as theſe are fuel for the Fire.
ndeed Ten Thouſand Pities 'tis to ſee
uch lovely Creatures in this Caſe to be.
Did they by true Regeneration draw
he Sap of Life from Jeſſe's *Root, the Law*
y which they now to wrath condemned are,
Would ceaſe to curſe, and God ſuch Buds would ſpare.
ut out of him there's none of theſe can move
is unrelenting Heart, or draw his Love.
hen cut me off from this accurſed Tree,
eſt I for ever be cut off from thee.

CHAP. II.

Upon the Union of the Graff with the Stock.

Whene're you Bud or Graft, therein you ſee
How Chriſt and Souls muſt here united be.

OBSERVATION.

WHen the Husbandman hath prepared his Graffs in the Seaſon of the year, he carries hem, with the Tools that are neceſſary for that ork, to the Tree or Stock he intends to ingraft, nd having cut off the Top of the Limb, in ſome raight ſmooth part, he cleaves it with his Knife r Chiſſel a little beſide the pith, knocks in his Wedge to keep it open, then (having prepared he Graff, he carefully ſets it into the cleft, joining

the

the inner ſide of the Barks, of Graff or Stock together, (there being the main current of the Sap) then pulls out his wedge, binds both together (as in Barking) and Clays it up, to defend the tender Graff and wounded Stock from the injuries of the Sun and Rain.

Theſe tender Cyens quickly take hold of the Stock, and having immediate Coalition with it, drinks in its Sap, concoct it into their own nouriſhment, thrive better, and bear more and better Fruits than ever they would have done upon their natural Root; yea, the ſmalleſt Bud, being carefully inocculated and bound cloſe to the Stock, will in ſhort time become a flouriſhing and fruitful Limb.

APPLICATION.

THis carries a moſt ſweet and lively reſemblance of the Souls Union with Chriſt by Faith; and indeed there is nothing in nature that ſhadows forth this great Goſpel-myſtery like it: 'Tis a Thouſand pities that any who are imployed about, or are but Spectators of ſuch an action, ſhould terminate their thoughts (as too many do) in that natural Object, and not raiſe up their Hearts to theſe Heavenly Meditations, which it ſo fairly offers them.

1. When a Twig is to be ingrafted, or a Bud inocculated, it's firſt cut off by a keen Knife from the Tree on which it naturally grew.

And when the Lord intends to graft a Soul into Chriſt, the firſt work about it is cutting work, *Acts* 2. 37. their Hearts were cut by Conviction and deep Compunction; no Cyen is ingrafted with-

out

but cutting, no Soul united with Christ without a cutting sense of sin's misery, *Joh.* 16. 8, 9.

2. When the tender shoot is cut off from the Tree, there are (ordinarily) many more left behind upon the same Tree, as promising and vigorous as that which is taken; but it pleaseth the Husbandman to chuse this, and leave them.

Even so it is in the removing or transplanting of a Soul by Conversion, it leaves many behind it in the state of Nature, as likely and promising as it self; but so it pleaseth God to take this Soul, and leave many others; yea, often such as grew upon the same Root; I mean, the immediate Parent, Mal. 1.2. *Was not* Esau Jacob's Brother (*saith the Lord*) *yet I loved* Jacob, *and I hated* Esau.

3. When the Graffs are cut off, in order to this work, 'tis a Critical Season with them; if they lye too long before they are ingrafted, or take not with the stock, they die, and are never more to be recovered; they may stand in the stock a while, but are no part of the Tree.

So when Souls are under a work of Conviction, it is a Critical time with them; many a one have I known then to miscarry, and never recovered again; they have indeed for a time stood like dead Graffs in the stock, by an external dead-hearted Profession, but never came to any thing; and as such dead Graffs, either fall off from the stock, or moulder away upon it, so do these, 1 *Joh.* 2. 19.

4. The Husbandman when he hath cut off Graffs or tender Buds, makes all the convenient speed he can to close them with the stock; the sooner that's done, the better; they get no good by remaining

as they are. And truly it concerns the Servants of the Lord, who are imployed in this work of ingraffing Souls into Christ, to make all the haste they can, to bring the convicted Sinner to a closure with Christ. As soon as ever the trembling Jaylor cried, *What shall I do to be saved? Paul* and *Silas* immediately direct him to Christ, *Acts* 16. 31, 32. They do not say, it's too soon for thee to act Faith on Christ, thou art not yet humbled enough, but believe in the Lord *Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*

5. There must be an incision made in the stock before any Bud can be inocculated, or the stock must be cut and cleaved, before the Cyon can be ingrafted, according to that in the Poet *Venerit insitio, fac ramum ramus adoptet.* (i. e.)

To Graffs, no living Sap the stocks impart,
Unless you wound and cut them near the Heart.

Such an Incision or Wound was made upon Christ, in order to our ingrafting into him, *Joh.* 19. 34. the opening of that deadly Wound gives Life to the Souls of Believers.

6. The Graff is intimately united, and closely conjoyned with the stock, the conjunction is so close, that they become one Tree.

There is also a most close and intimate Union betwixt Christ and the Soul that believeth in him. It is emphatically expressed by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. *He that is joined to the Lord, is one Spirit.* The word imports the neareſt, closest and strictest Union. Christ and the Soul cleave together in a blessed Oneness, as those things do that are glued one

to

another; ſo that, look as the Graff is really the ſtock, and the Spirit or Sap of the ſtock is ally in the Graff, ſo a Believer is really (though yſtically) in *Chriſt*; and the Spirit of *Chriſt* is ally communicated to a Believer. *I live*, ſaith aul, *yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me*, Gal. 2. 20. e that *dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God him*, 1 Joh. 4. 16.

7. Graffs are bound to the ſtock by Bonds ade of Hay or Flags; theſe keep it ſteddy, elſe he Wind would looſe it out of the ſtock.

The Believing Soul is alſo faſtened to Chriſt y Bands, which will ſecure him from all danger f being looſed off from him any more. There re two Bands of this Union; the Spirit on God's art, this is the firm Bond of Union, without hich we could never be made one with Chriſt, om. 8. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, e is none of his*; and *Faith* on our part, *Eph.* 3. 17. *hat Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by Faith.* Theſe old ſtrongly.

8. Tho' the ſtock be one and the ſame, yet ll Graffs do not thrive and flouriſh alike in it, ome out-grow the reſt; and thoſe that grow ot ſo well as the others do, the fault is in them, nd not in the ſtock: So it is with Souls really nited to Chriſt; all do not flouriſh alike in him, he Faith of ſome grows exceedingly, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 3. he things that be in others are ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 2. and ſuch Souls muſt charge the fault pon themſelves. *Chriſt* ſends up living Sap enough, not only to make all that are in him living, but fruitful Branches.

REFLE-

REFLECTION.

Four Comfortable Reflections for a Regenerate Soul.

1. Is it so indeed betwixt Christ and my Soul, as it is betwixt the ingrafted Cyen and the Stock? What Honour and Glory then hath Christ conferred upon me, a poor unworthy Creature? What! to be made one with him, to be a living Branch of him, to be joined thus to the Lord! Oh! what a preferment is this! It is but a little while since I was a wild and cursed Plant, growing in the Wilderness amongst them that shall shortly be cut down and faggoted up for Hell; for me to be taken from amongst them, and planted into Christ! O my Soul! fall down and kiss the Feet of Free Grace, that moved so freely towards so vile a Creature! The Dignities and Honours of the Kings and Nobles of the Earth, are nothing to mine; 'twas truly confessed by one of them, that it is a greater Honour to be a Member of Christ, than the Head of an Empire. Do I say, a greater Honour than is put upon the Kings of the *Earth?* I might have said, it's a greater *Honour* than is put upon the Angels of Heaven; for to which of them said Christ at any time, thou art Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh? *Behold! what manner of love is this!* 1 Joh. 3. 1.

2. Look again upon the ingrafted Cyens, O my Soul, and thou shalt find, that when once they have taken hold of the stock, they live as long as there is any Sap in the Root; and because he liveth, I shall live also, for my Life is hid with Christ in God, *Col.* 3. 3. The Graff is preserved in the stock, and my Soul is even so *preserved in Christ Jesus*, Jude 1.

3. Am

3. Am I joined to the Lord as a Myſtical part r Branch of him? How dear art thou then, O my oul, to the God and Father of my Lord Jeſus hriſt! What! a Branch of his dear Son! What an God with-hold from one ſo ingratiated? *Eph.* . 6. *All is yours* (ſaith my God) *for ye are Chriſt's nd Chriſt is God's*, 1 Cor. 3. 23.

4. Once more, draw matter of Inſtruction as ell as comfort from this ſweet Obſervation. Seeng God hath put all this Honour upon thee, by is moſt Intimate Union with his Chriſt, look to (my Soul) that thou live and walk as becomes Soul, thus one with the Lord; be thou tender ver his Glory: Doth not that which ſtrikes at he Root, ſtrike at the very Life of the Graff? nd ſhall not that which ſtrikes at the very Glo- y of Chriſt, tenderly touch and affect thee? Yea; e thou tenderly affected with all the Reproaches hat fall upon him from abroad, but eſpecially ith thoſe that redound to him from thine own nfruitfulneſs. O, diſgrace not the Root that ears thee; let it never be ſaid that any evil Fruit hall be found upon a Branch that lives and is fed y ſuch a Root.

The POEM.

OH what conſidering ſerious Man can ſee
The cloſe conjunction of the Graff and Tree;
nd whilſt he contemplates, he doth not find
This Meditation grafted on his mind?
am the Branch, and Chriſt the Vine,
Thy gracious hand did pluck
Me from that native ſtock of mine,
That I his Sap might ſuck.

The

The bloudy Spear did in his Heart
A deep Inciſion make,
That Grace to me he might impart,
And I thereof partake.
The Spirit and Faith is that firm band
Which binds us faſt together,
Thus we are claſped hand in hand,
And nothing can us ſever.
Bleſs'd be that hand which did remove
Me from my native place,
This was the wonder of thy love,
The triumph of thy Grace.
That I a wild and curſed Plant
Should thus preferred be,
Who all thoſe Ornaments do want,
Thou maiſt in others ſee.
As long as e're the Root doth live,
The Branches are not dry;
Whilſt Chriſt hath Grace and Life to give,
My Soul can never die.
O Bleſſed Saviour! never could
A Graff cleave to the Tree,
More cloſe then thy poor creature would
united be with thee.
My Soul, diſhonour not thy Root,
'Twill be a Shame for thee
To want the choiceſt ſorts of Fruit,
And yet thus graffted be.

Thus you may Shake from graffs before they blow,
More precious Fruit then e're on Trees did grow.

CHAP

CHAP. III.

Upon the Gathering in of Fruits in Autumn.

When Trees are shak'd, but little Fruit remains,
Just such a remnant to the Lord pertains.

OBSERVATION.

IT is a pleasant sight in Autumn to see the fruitful Branches hanging full of Clusters, which weigh the Boughs to the Ground.

Aspice curvatos pomorum pondere ramos
Ut sua quod peperit vix ferat arbor onus.
Which I may thus English;
O what a pleasant sight it is to see
The fruitful Clusters bowing down the Tree.

But these laden Branches are soon eased of their burden, for as soon as they are ripe, the Husbandman ascends the Tree, and shaking the Limbs with all his might, causes a fruitful shower to fall like hailstones upon the ground below, which being gather'd to a heap, are carried to the pound, *broken* all to pieces in a Trough, and squeez'd to a dry lump in the Press, whence all their juice and moisture runs into the Fat. How few escape this Fat, of all those multitudes that grew in the Orchard? If you now look upon the Trees, you may possibly see here one, and there another, two or three upon the utmost Branches, but nothing in comparison to the vast numbers that are thus used.

APPLI-

APPLICATION.

THis ſmall remains of Fruit, which are eithe
left upon the Tree, or gather'd in for a
hoard, do well reſemble that ſmall *number of God*
Elect in the World, which Free Grace hath re
ſerved out of the general ruin of Mankind. For
things are excellently ſhadowed forth to us b
this ſimilitude.

1. You ſee in a fruitful Autumn, the Trees eve
oppreſt and over-laden with the weight of the
own Fruits before the ſhaking time come, and *the*
they are eaſed of their burden. Thus the whol
Creation groans under the weight of their ſi
who inhabit it, *Rom.* 8. 22. the *Creatures are in Bon*
dage, and by an Elegant *Proſopopeia*, are ſaid, bot
to groan and wait for deliverance. The Origin
Sin of Man brought an Original Curſe, which bu
dens the Creature, Gen. 3. 17. *Curſed is the groun*
for thy ſake; and the Actual Sin of Man brings Act
al Curſes upon the Creature, *Pſal.* 107. 34. Th
the Inhabitants of the World load and burden i
as the Limbs of a Tree are burdened, and ſome
times broken with the weight of their own Frui

2. You may obſerve it in your Orchards ever
year, what abundance of Fruits daily fall, eithe
by ſtorms, or of their own accord; but when th
ſhaking time comes, then the ground is covered a
over with Fruit. Thus it is with the World, th
Myſtical Tree, with reſpect to Men that inhabit
there is not a year, day or hour, to which ſom
drop not, as it were, of their own accord by a n
tural death; and ſometimes Wars, and Epidemic
Plagues blow down thouſands together into the
Grave

Graves; theſe are as high Winds in a fruitful Orchard, but when the ſhaking time, the Autumn of the World comes, then all its Inhabitants ſhall be ſhaken down together, either by Death, or a Tranſlation equivolent thereunto.

3. When Fruits are ſhaken down from their Trees, then the Husbandman ſeparates them; the far greater Part for the Pound, and ſome few he reſerves for an hoard, which are brought to his Table, and eaten with pleaſure. This excellently ſhadows forth that great Separation, which Chriſt will make in the end of the World, when ſome ſhall be caſt into the Wine-preſs of the Almighties Wrath, and others preſerved for Glory.

4. Thoſe Fruits which are preſerved on the Tree, or in the hoard, are comparatively but an handful to thoſe that are broken in the Pound: Alas! 'Tis ſcarce one of a Thouſand, and ſuch a ſmall remnant of elected Souls hath God reſerved for Glory.

I look upon the World as a great Tree, conſiſting of four large Limbs or Branches; this *Branch* or *Diviſion* of it on which we grow, hath doubtleſs a greater number of God's Elect upon it, than the other three; and yet when I look with a ſerious and conſidering Eye upon this fruitful *European* Branch, and ſee how much rotten and withered *Fruit* there grows upon it, it makes me ſay as *Chryſoſtom* did of his populous *Antioch*, Ah, how ſmall a remnant hath *Jeſus Chriſt* among theſe vaſt numbers! *Many* indeed *are called*, but, ah, *how few are choſen!* Mat. 20. 16. Alas! They are but as the gleanings when the Vintage is done; here and

there one upon its out-moſt Branches. To allude to that, *Iſa.* 17. 6. It was a ſad Obſervation which that ſearching Scholar (Mr. *Brierwood*) long ſince made upon the World, that dividing it into thirty equal parts, he found no leſs than nineteen of them wholly overſpread with Idolatry and Heatheniſh Darkneſs; and of the eleven remaining parts no leſs than ſix are *Mahometans*; ſo that there remains but five of thirty, which profeſs the Chriſtian Religion at large; and the far greater part of theſe remaining five, are invellop'd and drowned in *Popiſh* darkneſs; ſo that you ſee the Reformed *Proteſtant Religion* is confined to a ſmall ſpot of ground indeed. Now, if from theſe we ſubſtract all the groſly ignorant, openly profane, meerly civil, and ſecretly hypocritical; judge then in your ſelves, how ſmall a ſcantling of the World falls to Chriſt's ſhare!

Well might Chriſt ſay, *Mat.* 7. 14. *Narrow is the way, and ſtrait is the gate, that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* And again, *Luke* 12. 32. *Fear not, little, little flock.* The large piece goes to the Devil, a little remnant is Chriſt's, *Rom.* 9. 27. Saints in Scripture are called *Jewels*, Mal. 3. 17. Precious Pearls and Diamonds, which the *Latines* call *Uniones. Quia nulli duo ſimul reperiuntur* (ſaith *Pliny*) becauſe Nature gives them not by pairs, but one by one. How many Pebbles to one Pearl? Suitable to this notion, is that complaint of the Prophet, *Mic.* 7. 1, 2. *Wo is me, for I am as when they have gathered the Summer Fruits, as the Grape-gleanings of the Vintage, there is no cluſter to eat; my Soul deſired the firſt ripe fruits; the good man*

man is periſhed out of the earth, and there is none (*i. e.* none comparatively) *upright among men.* The *Prophet* alludes to a poor hungry man, that after the gathering time is paſt, comes into an Orchard deſiring ſome choice Fruits to eat, but alas! He finds none; there is no Cluſter; poſſibly here and there a ſingle Saint, like a ſingle Apple, here and there one after the ſhaking time. True Saints are the World's Rarieties.

REFLECTIONS.

A Reflection for one that follows the example of the multitude.

1. What then will be my Lot, when that great ſhaking time ſhall come, who have followed the multitude, and gone with the Tide of the World? How even when I have been preſſed to ſtrictneſs and ſingular diligence in the matters of Salvation, and told what a narrow way the way of Life is, have I put it off with this; if it be ſo, then wo to Thouſands! Ah, fooliſh Heart! Thouſands and ten Thouſands ſhall be woful and miſerable indeed to all *Eternity*. Will it be any mitigation to my miſery, that I ſhall have Thouſands of miſerable Companions with me in Hell? Or will it be admitted for a good plea at the Judgment-ſeat, Lord, I did as the generality of my Neighbours in the World did; except it were here and there a more preciſe Perſon, I ſaw none, but lived as I lived. Ah, fooliſh Sinner! Is it not better go to Heaven alone, than to Hell with Company? The worſt Courſes have always the moſt Imitators, and the Road to Deſtruction is thronged with Paſſengers.

A Reflection for an Abuser of Mercy.

2. And how little better is my *condition?* Who have often fathered the wickedneſs of my own Heart, upon the Incouragement of Mercy. This hath my *Heart* pleaded againſt *Strictneſs* and *Duty.* God is a merciful God, and will not be ſo ſevere with the World to Damn ſo many Thouſands as are in my Condition; deluded Soul, if God had Damned the whole Race of *Adam*, he had done them no wrong; yea, there is more Mercy in ſaving but one Man, than there is of ſeverity and rigour in Damning all: How many Drunkards and Adulterers have lived and died with thy Plea in their Mouths? *God is a merciful God*; but yet his Word expreſly ſaith, *Be not deceived, ſuch ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. God indeed, is a God of Infinite Mercy; but he will never exerciſe his Mercy to the prejudice of his Truth.

A Reflection for an Elect Soul.

3. O, what rich Grace is here! That in a general Shipwrack *Mercy* ſhould caſt forth a Line or Plank to ſave me! That when millions periſh, I with a few more ſhould eſcape that perdition! Was it the Father's good Pleaſure to beſtow the Kingdom upon a little Flock, and to make me one of that number? What ſingular Obligations hath *Mercy* put upon my Soul! The fewer are ſaved, the more cauſe have they that are, to admire their Saviour. If but one of a Thouſand had been Damned, yet my Salvation would have been an Act of infinite Grace; but when ſcarce one of a Thouſand are ſaved, what ſhall I call that Grace, that caſt my Lot among them!

The

The POEM.

HE that with ſpiritual Eyes in Autumn ſees
The heaps of Fruit which fall from ſhaken Trees,
Like ſtorms of Hail-ſtones; and can hardly find
One of a thouſand that remains behind:
Methinks this Meditation ſhould awake
His Soul, and make it like thoſe Trees to ſhake.
Of all the Cluſters which ſo lately grew
Upon theſe Trees, how few can they now ſhew?
Here one, and there another; two or three
Upon the outmoſt branches of a Tree.
The greateſt numbers to the Pound are born,
Squeez'd on the Trough, and all to pieces torn:
This little handful's left to ſhadow forth
To me God's remnant in this peopl'd Earth.
If o're the whole Terreſtrial Globe I look,
The Goſpel viſits but a little Nook.
The reſt with horrid darkneſs overſpread,
Are faſt aſleep, yea, in tranſgreſſions dead.
Whole droves to Hell the Devil daily drives;
Not one amongſt them once reſiſt or ſtrives.
And in this little Heaven-inlightned ſpot,
How vaſt an intereſt hath Satan got?
But few of Holineſs Profeſſion make,
And if from thoſe that do profeſs I take
The ſelf deluding Hypocrites, I fear
To think how few remain that are ſincere.
O tax not mercy that it ſaves ſo few,
But rather wonder that the Lord ſhould ſhew
Mercy to any; quarrel not with grace,
But for thy ſelf God's gracious terms embrace.

When all were Shipwrackt, thou ſhouldſt wonder more
To find thy ſelf ſo ſtrangely caſt aſhore,
And there to meet with any that can tell
How narrowly they alſo ſcap'd from Hell.
The ſmaller numbers mercy ſaves, the higher
Ingagements lye on thee ſtill to admire.
Had the whole Species *periſh'd in their ſin,*
And not one invididual ſaved been;
Yet every tongue before him muſt be mute,
Confeſs his righteouſneſs, but not diſpute.
Or had the hand of mercy, which is free,
Taken another, and paſs'd over me;
I ſtill muſt juſtifie him, and my tongue
Confeſs my maker had done me no wrong.
But if my name he pleaſe to let me ſee
Enroll'd among thoſe few that ſaved be,
What admiration ſhould ſuch mercy move!
What thanks, and praiſe, and everlaſting love!

CHAP. IV.

Upon the Cutting down of Dead Trees.

Dead barren Trees you for the Fire prepare,
In ſuch a Caſe all fruitleſs Perſons are.

OBSERVATION.

AFter many years patience, in the uſe off all means to recover a Fruit-tree, if the Husbandman ſee it be quite dead, and that there can be no more expectation of any Fruit from it, he brings his Axe and hews it down by the Root; and from

from the Orchard it's carried to the Fire, it being then fit for nothing elſe; he reckons it imprudent to let ſuch a uſeleſs *Tree* abide in good *ground*, where another might be planted in its room that will better pay for the ground it ſtands in. I my ſelf once ſaw a large Orchard of Fair but fruitleſs Trees, all rooted up, rived abroad, and ricked up for the Fire.

APPLICATION.

THUS deals the Lord by uſeleſs and barren Profeſſors, who do but cumber his ground, Mat. 3. 10. *And now alſo the Axe is laid to the root of the trees; therefore every tree that brings not forth good fruit, is hewn down and caſt into the Fire.* And Luk. 13. 7. *Then ſaid the dreſſer of the vineyard, Behold, this three years I came ſeeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none; cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* Theſe three years, alluding tothe time of his Miniſtry, he being at that time entring upon his laſt half year, as one obſerves by harmonizing the Evangeliſts, ſo long he had waited for the Fruit of his Miniſtry among thoſe dead-hearted *Jews*; now his Patience is even at an end, cut them down (ſaith he) why cumber they the ground? I will plant others, (*viz.* the *Gentiles*) in their room. This hewing down of the barren Tree doth in a lively manner ſhadow forth God's Judicial Proceedings againſt formal and empty Profeſſors under the Goſpel; and the reſemblance clearly holds in theſe following Particulars.

1. The Tree that is to be hewn down for the Fire, ſtands in the Orchard among other flouriſh-

ing Trees, where it hath enjoyed the benefit of a good Soyl, a ſtrong Fence, and much Culture; but being barren, theſe priviledges ſecure it not from the Fire. It is not our ſtanding in the viſible Church, by a powerleſs Profeſſion among real Saints with whom we have been aſſociated, and enjoyed the rich and excellent waterings of Ordinances, that can ſecure us from the wrath of God, *Mat.* 3. 8, 9. *Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and think not to ſay within your ſelves, we have* Abraham *to our father.* Neither *Abraham*, nor *Abraham*'s God, will acknowledge ſuch degenerate Children; if *Abraham*'s Faith be not in your *Hearts*, it will be no advantage that *Abraham*'s Blood runs in your *Veins*. 'Twill be a poor plea for *Judas*, when he ſhall ſtand before *Chriſt* in Judgment, to ſay, Lord I was one of thy Family, I Preached for thee, I did eat and drink in thy preſence: Let theſe Scriptures be conſulted, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Mat.* 25. 11, 12. *Rom.* 2. 17. and 25.

2. The Husbandman doth not preſently cut down the Tree, becauſe it puts not forth as ſoon as other Trees do, but waits as long as there is any hope, and then cuts it down. Thus doth God wait upon barren dead-hearted Perſons, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from Year to Year; *for the Lord is long-ſuffering to us-ward and not willing that any ſhould periſh, but all come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. Thus the long-ſuffering of God waited in the days of *Noah* upon thoſe dry Trees, who are now ſmoaking and flaming in Hell, 1 *Pet.* 3. 20. He waits long on Sinners, but keeps exact accounts of every year and day of his patience, *Luk.* 13. 7.

Theſe three years. And *Jer.* 25. 3. Theſe Twenty three years.

3. When the time is come to cut it down, the dead Tree cannot poſſibly reſiſt the ſtroke of the Axe, but receives the blow, and falls before it. No more can the ſtouteſt Sinner reſiſt the fatal ſtroke of death, by which the Lord hews him down, Eccl. 8. 8. *There is no man that hath power over the Spirit, to retain the Spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no diſcharge in that war.* When the pale Horſe comes, away you muſt into the Land of Darkneſs: Tho' thou cry with *Adrian*, O my poor Soul, whither art thou going! Die thou muſt, thou barren Profeſſor; tho' it were better for thee to do any thing elſe than die. What a dreadful ſcreech will thy Conſcience give, when it ſees the Axe at thy Root! And ſay to thee, as it is, Ezek. 7. 6. *An end is come, the end is come; it watcheth for thee, behold it is come.* O, ſaid *Henry Beauford*, (that rich and wretched Cardinal, Biſhop of *Wincheſter*, and Chancellor of *England*, when he perceived whereto he muſt) wherefore muſt I die? If the whole Realm would ſave my Life, I am able either by Policy to get it, or by Riches to buy it, Fye (quoth he) will not Death be hired? Will Riches do nothing? No, neither Riches nor Policy can then avail.

4. That ſide to which the Tree leaned moſt while it ſtood, that way it will fall when it is cut down; and as it falls ſo it lyes, whether to the South or North, *Eccleſ.* 11. 3. So it fares with theſe Myſtical Trees, I mean fruitleſs Profeſſors. Had their Hearts and Affections inclin'd and bend-

ed Heaven-ward whilſt they lived, that way no doubt they had fallen at their death; but as their Hearts inclined to ſin, and even bended to the World, ſo when God gives the fatal ſtroke, they muſt fall Hell-ward and Wrath-ward; and how dreadful will ſuch a fall be?

5. When the dead Tree is carried out of the Orchard, it ſhall never be among the living Trees of the Orchard any more; many years it grew among them, but now it ſhall never have a place there again. And when the barren Profeſſor is carried out of the World by death, he ſhall never be aſſociated with the Saints any more. He may then ſay, Farewel all ye Saints among whom I lived, and with whom I ſo often heard, faſted, prayed; I ſhall never ſee your Face more, Mat. 8. 11, 12. *I ſay unto you, that many ſhall come from the Eaſt, and Weſt, and North, and South, and ſhall ſit down with* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob, *in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the Children of the Kingdom ſhall be caſt forth into outer darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of Teeth.*

6. When the dead Tree is carried out of the Orchard, the Husbandman cuts off his Branches, and rives him aſunder with his Wedges. This alſo is the Lot of barren Profeſſors. *The Lord of that Servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and will cut him aſunder*; he ſhall be diſſected, or cut abroad, *Luk.* 12. 46.

Now therefore conſider this, ye that forget God, leſt I tear (or rend) *you in pieces, Pſal.* 50. 22. O direful day! when the ſame hand which planted, pruned, and water'd thee ſo long, and ſo tenderly,

ſhall

ſhall now ſtrike mortal ſtrokes at thee, and that without pity: *For he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour*, Iſa. 27. 11. For the day of mercy is over, and the day of his Wrath is fully come.

7. When this Tree is cleav'd abroad, then it's rotten, hollow inſide appears, which was the cauſe of it's barrenneſs; it looked like a fair and ſound-bodied Tree, but now all may ſee how rottten it is at the heart: So God will in that day, when he ſhall diſſect the barren Profeſſor, diſcover the rottenneſs of his Heart, and unſoundneſs of his Principles and End; then they who never ſuſpected him before, ſhall ſee what a hollow and rotten-hearted Profeſſor he was.

8. Laſtly, The fruitleſs Tree is caſt into the Fire. This alſo is the end and ſad iſſue of formality, Joh. 15. 16. *He is caſt forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and caſt them into the fire, and they are burned.* This is an undoubted truth, that there is no Plant in God's-Vineyard, but he will have glory from it by bearing Fruit, or glory on it by burning in the Fire. In this Fire ſhall they lye *gnaſhing their teeth*, Luk. 13. 38. and that both in indignation againſt the Saints, whom they ſhall ſee in glory, and againſt *Jeſus Chriſt*, who would not ſave them; and againſt themſelves, for loſing ſo fooliſhly the opportunities of Salvation. Do you behold when you ſit by the Fire, the froth that boyls out of thoſe flaming Logs? O think of that foam and rage of theſe undone Creatures, foaming and gnaſhing their Teeth in that Fire which is not quenched, *Mark* 9. 44.

REFLECTION.

A Reflection for a Formal Hypocrite.

How often have I passed by such barren Trees with a more barren Heart? As little thinking such a Tree to be the *Emblem* of my self, as *Nebuchadnezzar* did, when he saw that Tree in a Dream which represented himself, and shadowed forth to him his ensuing misery, *Dan.* 4. 13. But, Oh, my Conscience! My drouzy, sleepy Conscience! Wert thou but tender and faithful to me, thou wouldst make as round and terrible an Application of such a Spectacle to me, as the faithful Prophet did to him, *v.* 22. And thus wouldst thou, O my Soul, bemoan thy condition;

Poor wretch, here I grow for a little time, among the Trees of Righteousness, the Plants of Renown; but I am none of them, I was never planted a right Seed; some green and flourishing Leaves of Profession indeed I have, which deceive others, but God cannot be deceived; he sees I am fruitless and rotten at the heart. Poor Soul, what will thine end be but burning! Behold, the Axe lyeth by thy Root, and wonder it is, that there it should lye so long, and I yet standing! Still mercy pleads for a fruitless Creature; Lord, spare it one year longer. Alas! He need strike no great blow to ruin me, his very Breath blows to destruction, *Job* 4. 9. A frown of his Face can blast and ruin me, *Psa.* 80. 6. He is daily sollicited by his Justice to hew me down, and yet I stand. Lord, cure my Barrenness; I know thou hadst rather see Fruit than Fire upon me.

The POEM.

IF after pains and patience you can ſee
No hopes of Fruit, down goes the barren Tree.
You will not ſuffer Trees that are unſound,
And barren too, to cumber uſeful ground.
The fatal Axe is laid unto the root,
It's fit for fire, when unfit for fruit.
But though this be a dead and barren Tree,
Reader, I would not have it ſo to thee.
May it to thee this ſerious thought ſuggeſt,
In all the Orchard this dead Tree's the beſt.
Think on it ſadly, lay it cloſe to heart,
This is the caſe in which thou waſt, or art.
If ſo thou waſt, but now doſt live and grow
And bring forth fruit what praiſe and thanks doſt owe
To that wiſe Husbandman that made thee ſo.
O think when Juſtice lifted up its hand,
How mercy did then interceeding ſtand!
How pity did on thy behalf appear,
To beg reprival for another year:
Stop Lord, forbear him; all hope is not paſt,
He can but be for fire at the laſt.
Though many Sermons, many a gracious call
He hath reſiſted like a brazen Wall:
The next may win him, when thy Grace ſhall raiſe
Unto it ſelf a Monument of praiſe.
How ſhould this Meditation thaw and melt
The heart of him that hath ſuch mercy felt.
But if thou ſtill remain a barren Tree,
Then here, as in a Mirrour, thou mayſt ſee
Thy wretched ſtate, when Juſtice at a blow,
Requites God's patience in thine overthrow.

And

And canst thou bear it? Can thy heart indure
To think of everlasting burnings? Sure
This must thy lot, thy fearful portion be,
If thou continue still a barren Tree.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD PART OF Husbandry.

NOW from the pleasant Orchard let us walk
A turn i'th' Fields, and there converse and talk
With Cows and Horses, they can teach us some
Choice Lessons, though irrational and dumb.
My Reader's weary, yet I do not fear
To be forsaken by one Reader here.
He'll doubtless stay to hear what questions I
Propound to Beasts, and how they make reply.
The fatted Ox, or pamper'd Horse you ride,
Their Careless Master for his care thus chide.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Upon the Husbandman's Care for his Cattel.

More care for Horſe and Oxen many take,
Than for their Souls, or deareſt Children ſake.

OBSERVATION.

MAny Husbandmen are exceſſively careful about their Cattel, riſing themſelves early, or cauſing their Servants to riſe betimes to provender and dreſs them. Much time is ſpent in ſome Countreys, in trimming and adorning their Horſes with curious Trappings and Plumes of Feathers; and if at any time a Beaſt be ſick, what care is taken to recover and heal them? You will be ſure they ſhall want nothing that is neceſſary for them; yea, many will chuſe rather to want themſelves, than ſuffer their Horſes ſo to do; and take a great deal of Comfort to ſee them thrive and proſper under their hands.

APPLICATION.

WHat one ſaid of Bloody *Herod*, who ſlew ſo many Children at *Bethlehem*, That it were better to be his Swine, than his Son, may be truly enough apply'd to ſome Parents and Maſters, who take leſs care for the ſaving the Souls of their Children and Servants, than they do for the Bodies of thoſe Beaſts which daily feed at their Stalls and Cribs. Many there be who do in reference to their Souls,

Souls, as *Jacob* did, with respect to the preservation of their Bodies, when he put all the Herds of Cattel before, and his Wives and little Ones behind, as he went to meet his Brother *Esau*.

Jenk. *on* Jude *part* 2. *p.* 170.

'Tis a weighty saying of a grave Author; *It's vile ingratitude to rejoyce when Cattel multiply, and repine when Children increase; It's Heathenish distrustfulness to fear, that he who provides for your Beasts, will not provide for your Children; and it's no less than unnatural cruelty to be careful of the Bodies of Beasts, and careless of the Souls of Children.* Let us but a little compare your care and diligence in both respects, and see in a few Particulars, whether you do indeed value your own, or your Children and Servants Souls, as you do the Life and Health of a Beast.

1. Your care for your very Horses is expressed early, whilst they are but Colts, and not come to do you any Service; you are willing to be at pains and cost, to have them broken and brought to their way. This is more then ever many of them did for their Children; they can see them wild and profane, naturally taking a stroke or way of wickedness, but yet never were at any pains or cost to break them; these must be fondel'd and cockered up in the natural way of their own corruption and wickedness, and not a Rod or Reproof used to break them of it.

Clark's *Mir.* *p.* 506.

'Tis observ'd of the *Persians*, that they put out their Children to School as soon as they could speak, and would not see them in seven years

ears after, lest their Indulgence should do them urt.

2. You keep your constant set times, *Morning* nd *Evening*, to feed, water, and dress your Cat-el, and will by no means neglect it once; but ow many times have you neglected *Morning* and *Evening* Duties in your Families? Yea, how many e there, whose very Tables, in respect of any *Vorship* God hath there, do very little differ from he very Cribs and Mangers at which their Horses eed? As soon as you are up in a Morning, you re with your Beasts before you have been with our God; how little do such differ from Beasts? And happy were it, if they were no more accoun-able to God than their Beasts are.

The end of your care, cost and pains about your Cattel is, that they may be strong for labour, and he more serviceable to you; thus you comp'y with the end of their Beings. But how rare a thing s it to find these Men as careful to fit their Poste-ity to be useful and serviceable to God in their Generations, which is the end of their Beings? f you can make them rich, and provide good Matches for them, you reckon that you have fully ischarged the Duty of Parents; if they will learn o hold the Plow, that you are willing to teach hem; but when did you spend an hour to teach hem the way of Salvation?

Now to convince such careless Parents of the einousness of their Sin, let these four Queries be olemnly considered.

Qu. 1. Whether this be a sufficient discharge of hat great Duty which God hath laid upon Christi-

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an Parents, in reference to their Families? That God hath charged them with the Souls of their Families is undeniable, *Deut.* 6. 6, 7. *Eph.* 6. 4. If God had not cloathed you with his Authority to command them in the way of the Lord, he would never have charged them so strictly to yield you obedience as he hath done, *Eph.* 6. 1. *Col.* 3. 20. Well, a great trust is reposed in you, look to your Duty, for, without dispute, you shall answer for it.

Q. 2. Whether it be likely, if the time of Youth (which is the moulding Age) be neglected, they will be wrought upon to any good afterwards? Husbandmen, let me put a sensible Case to you? Do not you see in your very Horses, that whilst they are young, you can bring them to any way; but if once they have got a false stroke, and by long custom it be grown natural to them, then there is no breaking them of it: Yea, you see it in your very Orchards, you may bring a tender twig to grow in what form you please; but when its grown to a sturdy limb, there is no bending it afterwards to any other form that what it naturally took. Thus it is with Children, Prov. 22. 6. *Train up a Child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Qu. 3. Whether, if you neglect to instruct them in the way of the Lord, *Satan*, and their own natural Corruptions, will not instruct them in the way to Hell? Consider this ye careless Parents; if you will not teach your Children, the Devil will teach them; if you shew them not how to Pray, he will shew them how to Curse and Swear, and take

the

he Name of the Lord in vain; if you grudge time nd pains about their Souls, the Devil doth not. Oh, 'tis a ſad conſideration, that ſo many Children ſhould be put to School to the Devil!

Q. 4. What comfort are you like to have from hem when they are old, if you bring them not up n the nurture and admonition of the Lord when hey are young? Many Parents have lived to reap n their old Age, the fruit of their own folly and areleſsneſs, in the looſe and vain Education of heir Children. By *Lycurgus* his Law, no Parent was to be relieved by his Children in Age, if he gave them not good Education in their Youth; nd it is a Law at this day among the *Switzers*, That if any Child be condemned to die for a Capital Offence, the Parents of that Child are to be his Executioners; theſe Laws were made to provoke Parents to look better to their Charge. Believe this as an undoubted Truth, That that Child which becomes (through thy default) an nſtrument to diſhonour God, ſhall prove ſooner r later a Son or Daughter of Sorrow to thee.

REFLECTIONS.

A Reflection for Careleſs Parents.

1. God hath found out my ſin this day. This hath been my practice ever ſince I had a Family committed o my Charge; I have ſpent more ime and pains about the Bodies of my Beaſts, than he Souls of my Children; Beaſt that I am for ſo doing; little have I conſidered the preciouſneſs of my own, or their Immortal Souls. How careful have I been to provide Fodder to preſerve my Cattel in the Winter, whilſt I leave my own and their Souls

Souls to perish to Eternity, and make no provision for them? Surely my Children will one day Curse the time that ever they were born unto such a cruel Father, or of such a mercileſs Mother. Should I bring home the Plague into my Family, and live to ſee all my poor Children lie dead by the Walls, if I had not the heart of a Tyger, ſuch a ſight would melt my Heart; and yet the death of their Souls, by the Sin which I propagated to them, affects me not! Ah, that I could ſay, I had done as much for them, as I have done for a Beaſt that periſheth!

A Reflection for the Diſobedient Child of a Gracious Parent.

2. But unhappy wretch that I am, God caſt a better Lot for me, I am the Offspring of *Religious* and tender Parents, who have always deeply concerned themſelves in the everlaſting *ſtate of my Soul*; many Prayers and Tears have they poured out to God for me, both in my hearing as well as in ſecret; many holy and wholſom Counſels have they from time to time dropt upon me; many precious Examples have they ſet in their own practice before me; many a time when I have ſinned againſt the Lord, have they ſtood over me with a Rod in their Hands, and Tears in their Eyes, uſing all means to reclaim me; but like an ungracious wretch I have ſlighted all their Counſels, grieved their Hearts, and imbittered their Lives to them, by my ſinful courſes. Ah, my Soul! thou art a degenerate Plant; better will it be with the Offſpring of Infidels than with thee, if Repentance prevent not; now I live in one Family with them, but ſhortly I ſhall be ſeparated

eparated from them, as far as Hell is from Hea-
en; they now tenderly pity my Misery, but then
hey shall approve and applaud the Righteous Sen-
ence of Christ upon me: So little Priviledge shall
then have from my Relation to them, that they
hall be produced as Witnesses against me, and all
heir rejected Counsels, Reproofs, and Examples,
harged home upon me, as the aggravations of my
ickedness; and better it will be, when it shall
ome to that, that I had been brought forth by a
east, than sprang from the Loins of such Parents.

The POEM.

YOur Cattel in fat Pastures thrive and grow, (So.
There's nothing wanting that should make them
he pamper'd Horse commends his Master's care,
ho neither Pains or Cost doth grudge or spare.
ut art not thou mean while the veriest Fool,
hat Pamper'st Beasts, and starv'st thy Precious Soul?
were well if you could die, as now you live,
ke Beasts; and had no more account to give.
that these Lines your Folly might detect!
ho both your own and Childrens Souls neglect,
o care for Beasts. O Man, prepare to hear
e doleful Language, that e're pierc'd thine Ear!
hen you your Children once in Hell shall meet,
nd with such Language their Damn'd Parents greet.
" *O cursed Father, wretched Mother, why*
" *Was I your off-spring? Would to God that I*
" *Had sprung from Tygers, who more tender be*
" *Unto their young, than you have been to me.*
" *How did you spend your thoughts, time, care & cost*
" *About my Body, whilst my Soul was lost?*

" *Did*

" *Did you not know I had a Soul that muſt*
" *Live, when this Body was reſolv'd to duſt?*
" *You could not chuſe but underſtand if I*
" *Without an Intereſt in Chriſt did die,*
" *It needs muſt come to this; O how could you*
" *Prove ſo remorſleſs, and no Pity ſhew!*
" *Oh cruel Parents! I may curſe the day*
" *That I was born of ſuch as did betray*
" *Their Child to endleſs Torments. Now muſt I*
" *With, and through you, in flames for ever lye.*
Let this make every Parent tremble, leſt
He loſe his Child, whilſt caring for his Beaſt.
Or leſt his own poor Soul do ſtarve and pine,
Whilſt he takes thoughts for Horſes, Sheep and Kine:

CHAP. II.

Upon the hard Labour and cruel Uſage of Beaſts.

When under loads your Beaſts do groan, think the
How great a mercy 'tis that you are Men.

OBSERVATION.

THough ſome Men be exceſſively careful an tender over their Beaſts (as was noted in th former Chapters) yet others are cruel and merci leſs towards them, not regarding how they rid or burden them. How often have I ſeen the fainting under their loads, wrought off their Leg and turned out, with galled Backs, into the Field

r High-ways to shift for a little Grass? Many mes have I heard and pitied them, groaning un- er unreasonable Burdens, and beaten on by mer- less drivers, till, at last, by such cruel usage, hey have been destroyed, and then cast into a itch for Dogs Meat!

APPLICATION.

SUch sights as these should make Men thankful for the *Mercy* of their Creation, and bless their ountiful Creator, that they were not made such reatures themselves. Some Beasts are made *ad sum*, only for Food, being no otherwise useful to lan, as *Swine*, &c. these are only fed for slaugh- r, we kill and eat them, and regard not their ies and struglings when the Knife is thrust to eir very Hearts; others are only *ad usum*, for rvice, whilst living, but unprofitable when dead, *Horses*; these we make to drudge and toyl for from day to day, but kill them not; others e both *ad esum, et usum*, for food when dead, d service whilst alive, as the *Ox*. These we make Plow our Fields, draw our Carriages, and after- ards prepare them for slaughter.

But *Man* was made for nobler ends, created *Lord* the lower World; not to serve, but to be served other Creatures; a Mercy able to melt the hard- t Heart into thankfulness. I remember, *Luther* ressing men to be thankful, that they e not brought into the lowest con- tion of Creatures, and to bless od that they can see any Creature low themselves, gives us a famous instance in the llowing Story: Two *Cardinals* (saith he) riding

Luther in 3. *Precept.*

in

in a great deal of Pomp to the Council of *Constance*, by the way they heard a man in the Fields weeping and wailing bitterly, they rode to him and asked what he ailed? Perceiving his Eye intently fixed upon an ugly Toad, he told them that his *Heart* was melted with the *consideration* of this Mercy, that God had not made him such a deformed and loathsome Creature, though he were formed out of the same Clay with it: *Hoc est quod amare fleo*, said he, This is that, that makes me weep bitterly. Whereupon one of the *Cardinals* cries out, Well, said the Father, the unlearned will rise and take Heaven, when we with all our Learning shall be thrust into Hell. That which melted the Heart of this poor Man, should melt every Heart, when we behold the Misery to which these poor Creatures are subjected. And this will appear a Mercy of no slight Consideration, if we but draw a Comparison betwixt our selves and these irrational Creatures, in these three Particulars.

1. Though they and we were made of the same mould and clay, yet how much better hath God dealt with us, even as to the outward man? The structure of our Bodies is much more excellent. God made other creatures by a word of *Command*, but Man by Counsel; it was not be Thou, but let Us make Man. We might have been made Stones without sense, or Beasts without reason, but we were made Men. The noble structure and symmetry of our Bodies invites our Souls not only to thankfulness but admiration. *David* speaking of the curious frame of the Body, saith, *I am wonderfully made*, Psal. 139. 14. or, as the vulgar reads

it, painted as with a Needle; like some rich piece of Needle-work curiously Embroidered with Nerves and Veins. Was any part of the common lump of Clay thus fashioned? *Galen* gave *Epicurus* an hundred years time to imagine a more commodious Situation, Configuration, or Composition of any one part of a humane Body; and (as one saith) if all the Angels in Heaven had studied to this day, they could not have cast the Body of man into a more curious Mould.

2. How little ease or rest have they? They live not many years, and those they do is in Bondage and Misery, groaning under the effects of sin; but God hath provided better for us, even as to our outward Condition in the World; we have the more rest, because they have so little. How many refreshments and comforts hath God provided for us, of which they are uncapable? If we be weary with labour, we can take our rest; but fresh or weary, they must stand to it, or sink under it from day to day.

3. What a narrow capacity hath God given to Beasts! What a large capacity to Man! Alas, they are only capable of a little sensitive pleasure; as you shall see sometimes, how they will frisk in a green Pasture, this is all they be capable of, and this death puts an end to; but how comprehensive are our Souls in their capacities? We are made in the Image of God; we can look beyond present things, and are capable of the highest happiness, and that to all Eternity; the Soul of a Beast is but a material form, which wholly depending upon, must needs die with the *Body*; but our *Souls* are a Divine spark

or blaſt; and when the Body dies, it dies not with it, but ſubſiſts even in its ſeparated ſtate.

REFLECTIONS.

A Reflection for an Unthankful Sinner.

1. How great a ſin is ingratitude to God, for ſuch a common, but choice Mercy of Creation, and Proviſion for me in this World? There is no Creature made worſe by kindneſs, but Man. There is a kind of gratitude which I may obſerve even in theſe brute Beaſts; they do in their way acknowledge their Benefactors; *the Ox knows his Owner, and the Aſs his Maſter's Crib.* How ready are they to ſerve ſuch as feed and cheriſh them? But I have been both unthankful and unſerviceable to my Creator and Benefactor, that hath done me good all my days; thoſe poor Creatures that ſweat and groan under the loads that I lay upon them, never ſinned againſt *God*, nor tranſgreſſed the Laws of their Creation as I have done; and yet God hath dealt better with me than with them. Oh that the Bounty of God, and his diſtinguiſhing Mercy between me and the Beaſts that periſh, might move and melt my Heart into thankfulneſs! O that I might conſider ſeriouſly what the higher and more excellent end of my Creation is, and might more endeavour to anſwer and live up to it! Or elſe (O my Soul) it will be worſe with thee than with the Beaſts. 'Tis true, they are under Bondage and Miſery; but it is but for a little time, death will end all their pains, and eaſe them of all their heavy loads; but I ſhall groan to all Eternity, under a heavier burden than ever they felt;

felt; they have no account to give, but ſo have I. What comfort is it that I have a larger capacity than a Beaſt hath? That God hath endowed me with Reaſon, which is denied to them? Alas! This will but augment my Miſery, and enlarge me to take in a greater meaſure of anguiſh.

A Reflection for an Elect Soul.

2. But how many ſteps (O my Soul) maiſt thou aſcend in the praiſes of thy God, when thou conſidereſt the Mercies that God hath ſtowed upon thee! Not only in that he made thee not a Stone or Tree without ſenſe, or an Horſe or Dog without reaſon; but that thou art not an Infidel without light, or an unregenerate Perſon without Grace. What! To have ſenſe, and all the delights of it, which Stones have not; reaſon, with the more high and noble pleaſures of it, which Beaſts have not; the light and knowledge of the great things of the Goſpel, which the Heathens have not; and ſuch an expectation and hope of unconceivable Glory and Felicity, which the unſanctified have not. O my Soul! How rich! How bountiful hath thy *God* been to thee! Theſe are the overflowings of his love to thee, who waſt moulded out of the ſame lump with the *Beaſts* that groan on Earth, yea with the Damned that howl in Hell; well may I ſay, that God hath been a good God to me.

The POEM.

WHen I behold a tyred Jade put on (gone,
With Whip and Spur till all his ſtrength be
See ſtreams of ſweat run down his bleeding ſides,
How little mercy's ſhewn by him that rides:

If I more thankleſs to my God don't prove,
Than ſuch a Rider's mercileſs. 'twill move
My Soul to praiſe; for who ſees this, and can
But bleſs the Lord, that he was made a Man?
And ſuch a ſight the Rider ought to move,
This Meditation duly to improve.

What hath this Creature done, that he ſhould be
Thus beaten, wounded, and tyr'd out by me?
He is my Fellow-creature, 'tis meer Grace,
I had not been in his, he in my caſe.
Ungrateful, ſtupid Man! God might have made
Me bear the Saddle, as I ſee this Jade.
He never ſinn'd, but for my ſin doth lye
Subjected unto all this Miſery.
Lord, make my Heart relent, that I ſhould be
To thee more uſeleſs, than my Horſe to me.
He did his utmoſt, went as long as ever
His Legs could bear him; but for me I never
Thus ſpent my ſtrength for God, but oft have been
Too prodigal thereof in ways of ſin;
Though he's the Horſe, and I the Man, 'twill be
Far better with my Horſe one day than me,
Unleſs thy Grace prevent, and ſuperadd
A new Creation unto that I had.
Could every Rider fix a ſerious thought
On ſuch a Subject, and hereby be taught
To ſpiritualize it, and improve it thus,
How ſweet would tedious Journeys be to us!
But ſuch a task, a graceleſs Heart digs out
More than the tyred Horſe I write about.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Upon the ſeeking of loſt Cattel.

When ſeeking your loſt Cattel, keep in mind,
That thus Chriſt Jeſus ſeeks your Souls to find.

OBSERVATION.

WHen Cattel are ſtrayed away from your Fields, you uſe all care and diligence to recover them again, tracing their footſteps, crying them in Market-Towns, ſending your Servants abroad, and inquiring your ſelves of all that you think can give news of them. What care and pains Men will take in ſuch caſes, was exemplified in *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 9. 4, 5. who with his Servant paſſed thro' *Mount Ephraim*, to ſeek the Aſſes that were ſtrayed from his Father, and thro' the Land of *Shaliſha*, and thro' the Land of *Shalim*, and they were not there, and thro' the Land of the *Benjamites*, but found them not.

APPLICATION.

THE care and pains you take to recover your loſt Cattel, carries a ſweet and lively repreſentation of the love of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in the recovery of loſt Sinners. *Jeſus Chriſt* came on purpoſe from Heaven, upon a like Errand, to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt, *Mat.* 18. 11. There are ſeveral Particulars in which this glorious deſign of Chriſt in ſeeking and ſaving loſt Man, and the care and pains of Husbandmen in recovering their loſt Cat-

tel, do meet and touch, though there be as many Particulars also in which they differ; all which I shall open under the following Heads.

1. We sometimes find that Cattel will break out of those very *Fields* where they have been bred, and where they want *nothing* that is needful for them. Just thus, lost man departed from his God, brake out of that pleasant enclosure where he was abundantly provided for, both as to Soul and Body; yet then he brake over the *Hedge* of the Command, and went astray, Eccles. 7. 29. *Lo this only have I found, that God made man upright, but he sought out to himself many inventions.* He was not content and satisfied with that blessed state God had put him into, but would be trying new conclusions to the loss and ruin both of himself and his Posterity.

2. *Strayers* are evermore *Sufferers* for it; all they get by it, is to be pinned and pounded; and what did Man get by departing from his God, but Ruin and Misery to Soul and Body? Will you have an Abreviate of his Sufferings and Losses? (the full account none can give you) why? By straying from his God, he lost the rectitude and holiness of his Nature; (like a true strayer) he is all dirty and miry, overspread and besmeared both in Soul and Body, with the odious filthiness of sin; he lost the liberty and freedom of his Will to good; a precious Jewel of inestimable value: This is a real Misery incurr'd by the Fall, though some have so far lost their understandings and humility, as not to own it; he hath lost his God, his Soul, his Happiness, and his very Bowels of Compassion towards himself in this miserable state.

3. When

3. When your Cattel are strayed, yea, tho' it be but one of the Flock or Herd, you leave all the rest, and go after that which is lost: So did *Jesus Christ*, who in the fore-cited place, *Mat.* 18. 12. compares himself to such a Shepherd; he left Heaven it self, and all the blessed *Angels* there, to come into this World to see lost man. O the precious esteem, and dear love that *Christ* had to poor Man! How did his Bowels yearn towards us in our lost state! How did he pity us in our Misery! As if he had said, Poor *Creatures* they have lost themselves, and are become a prey to the Devil, in a perishing state; I will seek after them, and save them. The Son of Man is come to seek and to save.

4. You are glad when you have found your strayers; much more is *Christ* when he hath found a lost Soul. O 'tis a great Satisfaction to him to *see the fruit of the travel of his Soul.* Isa. 53. *Yea, there is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than ninety nine just persons that need no repentance.* What demonstrations of joy and gladness did the Father of the Prodigal give, when he had found his Son that was lost? *Luk.* 15. 20.

5. When you have brought home your strayers, you sometimes clog them, to prevent their wandring again, and stop up the gaps with Thorns; and so doth God oftentimes by such Souls as are recovered and brought home to Christ; he hangs a clog of affliction to prevent their departure from God again, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7.

But then there are five Particulars in which Christ seeking lost Souls, and your seeking lost Cattel differ.

1. Your Cattel sometimes find the way home themselves, and return to you of their own accord; but lost Man never did, nor can do so; he was his own Destroyer, but can never be his own Saviour; it was possible for him not to have lost his God, but having once lost him, can never find him again of himself. Alas! His Heart is bent to backsliding, he hath no will to return. Hear how Christ complains, Joh. 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me.* Man's recovery begins in God, not in himself.

2. Your Servants can find, and bring back your lost Cattel as well as you; but so cannot Christ's Servants. Ministers may discover, but cannot recover them; they daily see, but cannot save them; lament them they can but help them they cannot; intreat and beg them to return they can, and do, but prevail with them they cannot. *Melancthon* thought when he began to preach, to perswade all; but old *Adam* was too hard for young *Melancthon.*

3. You seek all the Cattel that are strayed from you, especially the best; but Jesus Christ only seeks poor lost Man. There were other Creatures, and such as by Nature were more excellent, that lost their God and themselves; I mean the Apostate Angels; but he came not to seek them: Herein his singular love to Man appears.

4. When you have recovered and brought home your lost Cattel, you may lose them the second time, and never recover them again, but so cannot Christ. Man once recovered is for ever secured by him. *All that thou hast given me I have kept, and not one of them is lost, but the Son of Perdition*; and he was never savingly found, *Joh.* 17. 12.

5. Though

5. Though you prize your Cattel, yet you will not venture your Life for the recovery of them; rather let them go than regain them with ſuch an hazard; but Jeſus Chriſt not only ventured, but actually laid down his Life to recover, and ſave loſt man: He redeemed them at the price of his own Blood; he is that good Shepherd that laid down his Life for the Sheep. O the ſurpaſſing love of Chriſt to loſt Souls!

REFLECTIONS.

A Reflection for a loſt Soul.

1. Lord, I am a loſt Creature, an undone Soul; and herein lyes my miſery, that I have not only loſt my God, but haveno Heart to return to him! Nay, I fly from Chriſt, who is come on purpoſe from Heaven to ſeek and to ſave me; his Meſſengers are abroad ſeeking for ſuch as I am, but I avoid them, or at leaſt refuſe to obey their call and perſwaſions to return. Ah, what a miſerable ſtate am I in! Every ſtep I go is a ſtep towards Hell; my Soul, with the Prodigal, is ready to periſh in a ſtrange Countrey! But I have no mind, with him to return home; wretched Soul, what will the end of this be? If God have loſt thee, the Devil hath found thee; he takes up all ſtrayers from God: Yea, Death and Hell will ſhortly find thee, if Chriſt do not; and then thy recovery (O my Soul!) will be impoſſible: Why ſit I here periſhing and dying! I am not yet as irrecoverably loſt as the Damned are. O let me delay no longer, leſt I be loſt for ever.

A Reflection for one that was loſt, but is found.

2. O my Soul! for ever bleſs and admire the love of Jeſus Chriſt, who came from Heaven to ſeek and ſave, ſuch a loſt Soul as I was. Lord, how matchleſs is thy love! I was loſt, and am found. I am found, and did not ſeek; nay, I am found by him from whom I fled. Thy love O my Saviour, was a preventing love, a wonderful love; thou lovedſt me much more than I loved my ſelf; I was cruel to my own Soul, but thou waſt kind; thou ſoughteſt for me, a loſt Sinner, and not for loſt Angels; thy hand of Grace caught hold of me, and hath let go Thouſands, and ten Thouſands, as good as my ſelf by nature. Like another *David*, thou didſt reſcue my poor loſt Soul out of the mouth of the Deſtroyer; yea, more then ſo, thou didſt loſe thine one Life to find mine: And now, dear Jeſus, ſince I am thus marvellouſly recovered, ſhall I ever ſtraggle again from thee? O let it for ever be a warning to me, how I turn aſide into by-paths of ſin any more.

The POEM.

WHen Cattel from your Fields are gone aſtray,
And you to ſeek them through the country ride,
Enquiring for them all along the way,
Tracking their footſteps where they turn aſide;

One Servant this way ſent, another that,
Searching the Fields and Countrey round about:
This meditation now falls in ſo pat,
As if God ſent it to enquire you out.

My Beaſts are loſt, and ſo am I by ſin,
My wretched Soul from God thus wandring went;
As I ſeek them, ſo was I ſought by him,
Who from the Father's Boſom forth was ſent.

Purſu'd by Sermons, follow'd cloſe by Grace,
And ſtrong Convictions, Chriſt hath ſought for me,
Yea, though I ſhun him ſtill he gives me chaſe,
As if reſolv'd I ſhould not Damned be.

When Angels loſt themſelves it was not ſo,
God did not ſeek, or once for them enquire,
But ſaid, Let theſe Apoſtate Creatures go,
I'll plague them for it with Eternal Fire.

Lord what am I, that thou ſhouldſt ſet thine Eyes
And ſtill ſeek after ſuch a wretch as I?
Who matchleſs Mercy, and rich Grace deſpiſe,
As if in ſpight thereof reſolv'd to die.

Why ſhould I ſhun thee? Bleſſed Saviour, why
Should I avoid thee thus? Thou doſt not chaſe
My Soul to ſlay it; O that ever I
Should fly a Saviour that's ſo full of Grace.

Long haſt thou ſought me, Lord, I now return;
O let thy Bowels of compaſſion ſound,
For my departure I ſincerely mourn;
And let this day thy wandring Sheep be found.

CHAP. IV.

Upon the Feeding of Fat Cattel.

Fat Beasts you kill, the Lean you use to save;
God's Dispensations some such meaning have.

OBSERVATION.

IT is a good Observation of a Father, and well applyed; *Vituli triturantes quotidie ligantur, vituli mactandi quotidie in pascuis libere relinquuntur.* Oxen for use are daily yoaked and kept short, whilst those that are designed for the *Shambles*, are let loose in green Pastures to feed at pleasure; *Store* Beasts fare hard, and are kept lean and low; Feeding Beasts are excused from the Yoke, whilst *others* are laboured and wrought hard every day; the one hath more than he can eat, the other would eat more if he had it.

APPLICATION.

THus deals the Lord oft-times with his own Elect, whom he designs for Glory; and with the wicked, who are preparing for the day of wrath. Thus are they filled with earthly Prosperity, and Creature enjoyments, like rusty and wanton Beasts turned out at liberty in a fat Pasture, whilst poor Saints are kept hard and short, *Amos* 1. 4. *Hear this word, ye kine of* Bashan, *that are in the mountains of* Samaria, *which oppress the poor, and crush the needy.* These Metaphorical Kine of the prosperous Oppressors of the World, full fed, and wanton wicked men. 'Tis true, Heaven hath not

all

all the Poor, nor Hell all the Rich; but it's a very common diſpenſation of Providence, to beſtow moſt of the things of this World upon them that have no Portion in Heaven; and to keep them ſhort on Earth, for whom that Kingdom is provided. Let me draw forth the Similitude in a few Particulars.

1. The Beaſts of ſlaughter have the fatteſt paſtures; ſo have the ungodly in the World; *Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, they have more than heart could wiſh, Pſal.* 73. 7. *Their Hearts are as fat as greaſe, Pſal.* 119. 70. Theſe be they that fleet off the Cream of earthly Enjoyments, *whoſe bellies are filled with hidden treaſures*, Pſal. 17. 14. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked*, Job 9. 24. O, what full Eſtates? What an affluence of earthly delights hath God caſt in upon ſome wicked men? There is much wantonneſs, but no want in their dwellings; Some that now know not which way to turn themſelves in Hell, once knew not where to beſtow their Goods on Earth.

2. Feeding, grow wanton in their full paſtures; there you ſhall ſee them tumble and friſk, and kick up their heels. The ſame effect hath the proſperity of the wicked, it makes them wanton; their Life is but a diverſion from one pleaſure to another, *Job* 21. 11, 12, 13. *They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their Children dance; they take the timbrel, and harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the organ; they ſpend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.* The ſame Character doth the Prophet *Amos* give of them, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6. *They ſtretch themſelves upon beds of ivory, drink wine*

in

in blows, &c. and no ſorrow goes to their hearts These are they that live in pleaſures upon Earth, as a Fiſh in the Water, *Jam.* 5. 5.

3. Theſe fat paſtures do but the ſooner haſten the death of theſe Cattel; the ſooner they are fatted, the ſooner they are ſlaughtered; and the proſperity of the wicked ſerves to the ſame end. *The Proſperity of Fools ſhall deſtroy them*, (*i. e.*) it ſhall be the means and inſtrument of heating and heightning their Luſts, and thereby fitting them for deſtruction; their Proſperity is food and fuel to their Corruptions. Many wicked men had not been ſo ripe for Hell, had they not grown in the Sun-ſhine of Proſperity:

4. Fatted Beaſts do not in the leaſt underſtand the intent and meaning of the Husbandman, in allowing them ſuch large and fat paſtures, which he denies to his other Cattel; and as little as Beaſts, do wicked men underſtand the ſcope and end of God's Providences, in caſting Proſperity and Wealth upon them; little do they think their Tables are a Snare, a Gin, and a Trap for their Souls, they only (like Beaſts) mind what is before them, but do not at all underſtand the tendency and end of theſe their ſenſual delights.

5. Though the Husbandman keep his ſtore-Cattel in ſhort Commons, yet he intends to preſerve them: Theſe ſhall remain with him, when the others are driven to the ſlaughter.

Such a deſign of preſervation is carried on in all thoſe outward ſtraits, wants and hardſhips which the Lord expoſes his people to. I confeſs ſuch diſpenſations, for preſent, are very ſtumbling and puz-

puzzling things, even to gracious and wise Persons. To see wicked men, not only exempted from their Troubles, but even oppressed with prosperity; to see a godly man in wants and straits, and a wicked man have more than his heart can wish; is a case that poses the wisest Christian, till he consider the designs and issues of both those Providences, and then he acquiesces in the Wisdom of God so ordering it, *Psal.* 73. 5, 14, 18, 23.

REFLECTIONS.

A Reflection for a Voluptuous worldling.

1. Doth my Prosperity fat me up for Hell, and prepare me for the day of slaughter? Little cause have I then to glory in it, and lift up my heart upon these things. Indeed, God hath given, (I cannot say blessed me with) a fulness of Creature-Enjoyments; upon these my carnal heart seizeth greedily and securely, not at all suspecting a Snare lying in these things, for the ruin of my Soul. What are all these charming Pleasures, but so many Rattles to quiet my Soul, whilst its Damnation steals insensibly upon it? What are all my *Businesses* and Imployments in the *World*, but so many diversions from the Business of Life? There are but two differences betwixt me and the poorest Slave the Devil hath on Earth, such are whipt on to Hell by outward miseries, and I am coached to Hell in a little more Pomp and honour; these will have a less, and I a greater account in the day of Reckoning. O that I had never known Prosperity! I am now tumbling in a green pasture, and shortly shall be hanging up in the Shambles in Hell; if this be

the beſt fruit of my *Proſperity*, if I were taken *Captive* by cruel *Canibals*, and fed with the *richeſt fare*, but withal underſtood, that the deſign of it were to fat me up like a Beaſt, for them to feed upon; how little a ſtomach ſhould I have to *their Dainties?* O my Soul! it were much better for thee to have a ſanctified Poverty, which is the portion for many Saints, than an enſnaring Proſperity, ſet as a trap to ruin thee for ever.

A Reflection for a poor Chriſtian.

2. The wiſdom of my God hath allotted me but ſhort commons here, his Providence feeds me but from hand to mouth; but I am (and well may be) contented with my preſent ſtate; that which ſweetens it, is, that I am one of the Lord's preſerved. How much better is a Morſel of Bread, and a Draught of Water here, with an *expectancy* of Glory hereafter, than a fat Paſture given in, and fitting for the wrath to come? Well, ſince the caſe ſtands thus, bleſſed be God for my preſent Lot; though I have but little in hand, I have much in hope; my preſent Troubles will ſerve to ſweeten my future Joys; and the ſorrows of this Life will give a luſtre to the Glory of the next; that which is now hard to ſuffer, will then be ſweet to remember; my Songs then will be louder than my Groans now.

The POEM.

THoſe Beaſts which for the Shambles are deſign'd,
In fragrant flowery Meadows you ſhall find,
Where they abound with rich and plenteous fare,
Whilſt others graze in Commons thin and bare.

Thoſe

hoſe live aſhort and pleaſant Life, but theſe
rotract their lives in dry and ſhorter leas.
Thus lives the wicked, thus they do abound
With earthly glory, and with honour crown'd.
Their lofty heads unto the Stars aſpire,
And radiant beams their ſhining brows attire.
The fatteſt portion's ſerv'd up in their Diſh,
Yea, they have more than their own hearts can wiſh.
Diſſolv'd in pleaſures, crown'd with buds of May;
They, for a time, in theſe fat Paſtures play,
Friſk, dance and leap, like full-fed Beaſts; and even
Turn up their wanton heels againſt the Heaven.
Not underſtanding that this pleaſant life,
Serves but to fit them for the Butcher's Knife.
In fragrant Meads they tumbling are to day,
To morrow to the ſlaughter led away.
Their pleaſure's gone, and vaniſh'd like a bubble,
Which makes their future Torments on them double.
Mean while God's little flock is poor and lean,
Becauſe the Lord did ne're intend and mean
This for their portion; and beſides doth know
Their Souls prove beſt where ſhorteſt graſs doth grow.
Chear up poor flock, although your fare be thin,
Yet here is ſomeeching to take comfort in:
You here ſecurely feed, and need not fear;
Th' infernal Butcher can't approach you here.
'Tis ſomewhat that, but O, which far tranſcends,
Your glorious Shepherd's coming, who intends
To lead you hence unto that fragrant Hill,
Where with green paſtures he his flocks will fill.
On which he from Celeſtial Caſements pours
The ſweeteſt Dews, and conſtant gracious Showers.
Along whoſe banks Rivers of pleaſures ſlide,
There his bleſs'd flocks for ever ſhall abide. O

O envy not the worldlings present Joys,
Which to your future Mercies are but Toys.
Their pasture now is green, your's dry and burn
But then the Scene is chang'd, the Tables turn'd

CHAP. V.

Upon the Husbandman's Care for Posterity.

Good Husbands labour for Posterity,
To after Ages Saints must have an Eye.

OBSERVATION.

PRovident and careful *Husbandmen* do not only labour to supply their own Necessities while living, but to lay up something for their Posterity when they are gone; they do not only leave to their Children what their Progenitors left them, but they desire to leave it improved and bettered. None but bad Husbands and Spend-thrifts are of the Mind with that Heathen Emperor *Tiberius*, who having put all into such Confusions in the Empire, that it might be thought the *World* would end with him; yet pleased himself with this apprehension, That he should be out of the reach of it; and would often say, when I am dead let Heaven and Earth mingle; if the World will but hold my time, let it break when I am gone: But provident men look beyond their own time, and do very much concern themselves in the good or evil of their Posterity. APPLI-

APPLICATION.

WHat careful Husbands do, with respect to the provisions they make for their Children, that all prudent *Christians* are bound to do, with respect to the *Truths* committed to them, and by them to be transmitted to succeeding Saints.

In the first Ages of the World, even till the Law was given, faithful *Men* were instead of *Books* and *Records*; they did by Oral Tradition convey the *Truths* of God to Posterity; but since the Sacred Truth hath been consigned to Writing, no such Tradition (except full consentient with that written word) is to be received as Authentick; but the *Truths* therein delivered to the *Saints*, are by verbal *Declarations*, open *Confessions*, and constant *Sufferings*, to be preserv'd and deliver'd from Age to Age. This was the constant care of the whole Cloud of Witnesses, both Ancient and Modern, who have kept the Word of God's Patience, and would not accept their own *Lives*, *Liberties* or *Estates*, no, nor the whole World in exchange for that invaluable *Treasure* of *Truth*; they have carefully practised *Solomon*'s Counsel, Prov. 23.23. *Buy the Truth, but sell it not*; they would not alienate that fair Inheritance for all the Inheritances on Earth. Upon the same reasons that you refuse to part with, or imbezel your Estates, Christians also refuse to part with the Truths of God.

1. You will not waste or alienate your Inheritance, because it's precious, and of great value in your Eyes; but much more precious are God's Truths

Truths to his People. *Luther* profeſſed, he wou
not take the whole *World* for one *Leaf* of the *Bibl*
Tho' ſome profane Perſons may ſay with *Pilat*
What is *Truth?* Yet know that any one *Truth*
the *Goſpel* is more worth than all the Inheritanc
upon Earth; they are the great things of God
Law, and he that ſells them for the greateſt thing
in this World, makes a Soul-undoing Bargain.

2. You will not waſte or part with your Inher
tance, becauſe you know your Poſterity will b
much wronged by it. They that baffle or drink a
way an Eſtate, drink the Tears of their ſad Wi
dows, and the very Blood of their impoveriſhe
Children. The People of God do alſo conſider
how much the *Generations* to come are concerne
in the conſervation of the *Truths* of *God* for them
It cuts them to the *Heart*, but to think, that thei
Children ſhould be brought up to worſhip *Dum*
Idols, and fall down before a Wooden and Brea
den God. The very Birds and Beaſts will expoſ
their own *Bodies* to apparent danger of *Death* t
preſerve their young. Religion doth much mor
intender the hearts and bowels than Nature doth

3. You reckon it a foul diſgrace to ſell your E
ſtates, and become Bankrupts; 'tis a word tha
hears ill among you: And a Chriſtian accounts i
the higheſt reproach in the World, to be a *Trayto*
to, or an Apoſtate from the *Truths* of *God*. Whe
the Primitive *Saints* were ſtrictly required to de
liver up their Bibles, thoſe that did ſo were juſtl
branded and huſht out of their Company, unde
the odious Title of *Traditors*, or Deliverers.

4. You are ſo loth to part with your Eſtates,
becau

cauſe you know its hard recovering an Eſtate a-
in, when once you have loſt it. Chriſtians do
ſo know how difficult it will be for the People of
od, in times to come, to recover the Light of the
oſpel again, if once it be extinguiſh'd. There is
Truth of God recovered out of Antichriſt's
nds, without great wreſtlings, and much Blood.
he Church may call every Point of Reformed
octrine and Diſcipline ſo recovered, her *Naph-*
ies; for with great wreſtlings ſhe hath wreſt-
for them. *Earneſtly contending for the Faith once*
ivered to them, Jude 3.

5. To conclude, rather than you will part with
ur Eſtates, you will chuſe to ſuffer many wants
hardſhips all your Lives; you will fare hard,
go bare, to preſerve what you have for your
terity: But the People of God have put them-
ves upon far greater *hardſhips* than theſe, to pre-
ve *Truth*; they have choſen to ſuffer *Reproaches*,
erty, Priſons, Death, and the moſt cruel Tor-
nts, rather than the loſs of God's Truth. All
Martyrologies will inform you what their Suf-
ngs have been, to keep the word of God's Pati-
e; they have boldly told their Enemies, that
y might pluck their Hearts out of their Bodies,
ſhould never pluck the Truth out of their
rts.

REFLECTIONS.

. Baſe unbelieving Heart! How
e I flinched and ſhrunk *from Truth*
n it hath been in danger? I have
er choſen to leave it, than my
Liberty or Eſtate, as a prey to

A Reflection for cowardly and faint-hearted Profeſſors.

the

the Enemy. I have left truth, and juſt it is, tha the God of Truth ſhould leave me. Cowardl Soul, that durſt not make a ſtand for Truth Yea, rather bold and daring Soul, that would rather venture to look a wrathful God, than a angry Man in the Face. I would not own and preſerve the Truth, and the God of Truth wi not own me, 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. *If we deny him, he wi deny us.*

A Reflection for ſuch as ſuffer for Truth.

2. Lord! Unto me haſt tho committed the precious Treaſur and Truſt of Truth; and as I re ceived it, ſo do I deſire to delive it to the Generations to come, that the Peopl which are yet unborn may praiſe the Lord God forbid I ſhould ever part with ſuch a fai Inheritance, and thereby beggar my own, an thouſands of Souls! Thou haſt given me th Truth, and the World hates me, I well know that it is the ground of the quarrel; would but throw Truth over the Walls, how ſoo would a Retreat be ſounded to all Perſecutors But, Lord! Thy Truth is invaluably precious what a vile thing is my Blood, compared wit the leaſt of all thy Truths? Thou haſt charge me nor to ſell it, and in thy ſtrength I reſolv never to lift a Fine, and cut off that Golde Line, whereby thy Truths are entailed upon th People, from Generation to Generation: M Friends may go, my Liberty go, my Blood ma go, but as for thee, precious Truth, thou ſha never go.

3. Ho

3. How dear hath this Inheritance Truth coſt ſome Chriſtians? How tle hath it coſt us? We are entred o their Labours; we reap in ce, what they ſowed in Tears; in Blood. O the grievous ſufferings that they ſe to endure! Rather than to deprive us of ſuch Inheritance, thoſe noble Souls heated with the ve of Chriſt, and care for our Souls, made many d and brave Adventures for it; and yet, at at a low rate do we value what coſt them ſo r? Like young Heirs, that never knew the ting of an Eſtate, we ſpend it freely. Lord, us thankfully and diligently to improve thy ths, while we are in quiet poſſeſſion of them. Intervals of peace and reſt, are uſually of no continuance with thy People.

A Reflection for ſuch as are in quiet poſſeſſion of Truth.

The POEM.

Publick Spirit ſcorns to Plant no Root,
But ſuch from which himſelf may gather fruit:
hus he reaſons, if I reap the gains
y laborious Predeceſſors pains,
equal is it, that Poſterity
d reap the Fruits of preſent induſtry?
d every Age but ſerve its turn, and take
hought for future times; It ſoon would make
ankrupt World, and ſo entail a Curſe
Age to Age, as it grows worſe and worſe.
r Chriſtian Predeceſſors careful thus,
ave been to leave an Heritage to us.
riſt's precious Truths conſerved in their Blood,
no leſs price thoſe Truths our Fathers ſtood.

They

They have tranſmitted, would not alienate
From us their Children ſuch a fair Eſtate.
We eat what they did ſet, and ſhall Truth fail
In our days? Shall we cut off th'entail,
Or end the Line of Honour? Nay, what's worſe,
Give future Ages cauſe to hate, and curſe
Our memories? Like Naboth, *may this Age*
Part with their Blood ſooner than Heritage.
Let pity move us, let us think upon
Our Childrens Souls when we are dead and gone.
Shall they, poor Souls, in darkneſs grope, when w
Put out the light, by which they elſe might ſee
The way to Glory? Yea, what's worſe, Shall it
Be ſaid in time to come, Chriſt did commit
A precious Treaſure, purchas'd by his Blood,
To us, for ours, and for our Childrens good?
But we, like Cowards, falſe, perfidious Men,
For carnal eaſe, loſt it, our ſelves, and them?
O let us leave to carnal Ages more
Than we receiv'd from all that went before;
That thoſe to come may bleſs the Lord, and keep
Our Names alive when we in duſt ſhall ſleep.

CHA

CHAP. VI.

Upon the Husbandman's Care to prove and preserve his Deeds.

Deeds for your Lands you prove, and keep with care;
O that for Heaven you but as careful were!

OBSERVATION.

WE generally find Men are not more careful in trying Gold, or in keeping it, than they are in examining their Deeds, and preserving them; these are virtually their whole Estate, and therefore it concerns them to be careful of them: If they suspect a flaw in their Lease or Deed, they repair to the ablest Counsel, submit it to his Judgment, make the worst of their cause, and query about all the supposeable dangers with him; if he tell them their case is suspicious and hazardous, how much are they perplexed and troubled? they can neither eat, drink, or sleep in peace, till they have a good Settlement; and willing they are to be at much cost and pains to obtain it.

APPLICATION.

THese cares and fears, with which you are perplexed in such cases, may give you a little glimpse of those troubles of Soul, with which the people of God are perplexed about their Eternal condition, which perhaps you have been hitherto unacquainted with, and therefore slighted them as Fansies and Whimsies. I say, your own fears and

troubles, if ever you were engaged by a cunning and powerful Adversary in a Law-suit for your Estate, may give you a little glimpse of Spiritual Troubles; and indeed it is no more but a glimpse of it: For, as the loss of an earthly (though fair) Inheritance, is but a trifle to the loss of God, and the Soul to Eternity; so you cannot but imagine, that the cares, fears, and solicitudes of Souls about these things, are much, very much beyond yours. Let us compare the Cases, and see how they answer to each other.

1. You have Evidences for your Estates, and by them you hold what you have in the World. They also have Evidences for their *Estate in Christ*, and Glory to come; they hold all *in capite*, by vertue of their Intermarriage with Jesus Christ; they come to be enstated in that glorious Inheritance, contained in the covenant of Grace. You have their tenure in that Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. *All is yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* Faith unites them to him, and after they believe, they are sealed by the Spirit of Promise, *Eph.* 1. 13. They can lay claim to no Promise upon any other ground; this is their Title to all that they own as theirs.

2. It often falls out that after the sealing and executing of your Deeds or Leases, an Adversary finds some dubious Clause in them, and thereupon commences a Suit of Law with you. Thus it frequently falls out with the people of God, who after their believing and sealing time, have doubts and scruples raised in them about their Title. Nothing is more common, than for the Devil and *their* own

own unbelief to ſtart Controverſies, and raiſe ſtrong Objections againſt their Intereſt in Chriſt, and the Covenant of Promiſes. Theſe are cunning and potent Adverſaries, and do maintain long debates with the gracious Soul, and reaſon ſo cunningly and ſophiſtically with it, that it can by no means extricate and ſatisfie it ſelf; always alledging that their Title is worth nothing, which they poor Souls are but too apt to ſuſpect.

3. All the while that a Suit in Law is depending about your Title, you have but little Comfort or Benefit from your Eſtate; you cannot look upon it as your own, nor lay out moneys in Building or Dreſſing, for fear you ſhould loſe all at laſt. Juſt thus ſtands the caſe with doubting Chriſtians, they have little comfort from the moſt comfortable Promiſes, little benefit from the ſweeteſt Duties and Ordinances; they put off their own comforts, and ſay, If we were ſure, that all this were ours, we could then rejoice in them; but alas! our Title is dubious, Chriſt is a precious Chriſt, the Promiſes are comfortable things, but what if they be none of ours? Ah! how little doth the doubting Chriſtian make of his large and rich Inheritance?

4. You dare not truſt your own Judgments in ſuch caſes, but ſtate your caſe to ſuch as are Learned in the Laws; and are willing to get the ableſt Counſel you can to adviſe you: So are poor doubting Chriſtians, they carry their caſes from Chriſtian to Chriſtian, and from Miniſter to Miniſter, with ſuch requeſts as theſe. Pray tell me, what do you think of my condition? Deal plainly and faith-

fully with me; theſe be my grounds of doubting, and theſe my grounds of hope. O hide nothing from me! And if they all agree that their caſe is good, yet they cannot be ſatisfied till God ſay ſo too, and confirm the word of his Servants; and therefore they carry the caſe often before him, in ſuch words as thoſe, *Pſal.* 138. 23, 24. *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and ſee if there be any way of wickedneſs in me.*

5. You have little quiet in your Spirits, till the Caſe be reſolved, your Meat and Drink doth you little good; you cannot ſleep in the Night, *becauſe* theſe troubled thoughts are ever returning upon you: What if I ſhould be turn'd out of all at laſt? So it is with gracious Souls, their Eyes are held walking in the Night, by reaſon of the troubles of their hearts, *Pſal.* 77. 4. Such fears as theſe are frequently returning upon their Hearts: What if I ſhould be found a ſelf-deceiver at laſt? What if I do but hug a phantaſm inſtead of Chriſt? How can this, or that, conſiſt with Grace? Their Meat and Drink doth them little good; their Bodies are often macerated by the troubles of their Souls.

6. You will not make the beſt of your condition, when you ſtate your Caſe to a faithful Counſellor; neither will they, but oft-times (poor penſive Souls) they make it much worſe than indeed it is; charge themſelves with that which God never charged them with, though this be neither their Wiſdom, nor their Duty, but the fears of miſcarrying make them ſuſpect fraud in all they do or have.

7. Laſtly,

7. Laſtly, When your Title is cleared, your Hearts are eaſed; yea, not only eaſed, but overjoyed; though not in that degree, nor with the ſame kind of joy, that the Hearts of Chriſtians are overflowed, when the Lord ſpeaks peace to their Souls. O welcome the ſweet Morning light, after a tedious night of *darkneſs*; now they can eat their Bread with comfort, and drink their Wine (yea if it be but Water) with a merry Heart, *Eccleſ.* 9.7.

REFLECTIONS.

The Careleſs Soul's Reflection.

1. O how hath my Spirit been toſſed and hurried, when I have met with troubles and clamours about my Eſtate! But as for ſpiritual troubles, and thoſe Soul-perplexing caſes, that Chriſtians ſpeak of, I underſtand but little of them. I never called my Everlaſting ſtate in queſtion, nor brake an hours ſleep upon any ſuch account. Ah, my ſupine and careleſs Soul! Little haſt thou regarded how matters ſtand in reference to Eternity! I have ſtrongly conceited, but never throughly examined the validity of my Title to Chriſt and his Promiſes; nor am I able to tell, if my own Conſcience ſhould demand, whereupon my claim is grounded!

O my Soul! Why art thou ſo unwilling to examine how matters ſtand betwixt God and thee? Art thou afraid to look into thy condition, leſt by finding thine *Hypocriſie*, thou ſhouldſt loſe thy peace, or rather thy ſecurity? To what purpoſe will it be to ſhut thine Eyes againſt the light of Conviction, unleſs thou couldſt alſo find out a way

to prevent thy condemnation? Thou seest other *Souls*, how attentively they wait under the *Word*, for any thing that may speak to their conditions. Doubtless thou hast heard, how frequently and seriously they have stated their conditions, and opened their cases to the Ministers of Christ: But thou, O my Soul! hast no such cases to put, no doubts to be resolved; thou wilt leave all to the decision of the great day, and not trouble thy self about it now. Well, God will decide it, but little to thy comfort.

The Doubting Soul's Reflection.

2. I have heard how some have been perplexed by litigious Adversaries, but I believe none have been so tossed with fears, and distracted with doubts, as I have been about the state of my Soul. Lord, what shall I do? I have often carried my doubts and scruples to thine Ordinances, waiting for Satisfaction to be spoken there. I have carried them to those I have judged skilful and faithful, begging their resolution and help, but nothing will stick, still my fears are daily renewed. O my God, do thou decide my case! tell me how the state stands betwixt thee and me; my days consume in trouble, I can neither do, or enjoy any good, whilst things are thus with me; all my earthly Enjoyments are dry and uncomfortable things; yea, which is much worse, all my Duties and thine Ordinances prove so too, by reason of the troubles of my Heart! I am no Ornament to my Profession, nay, I am a discouragement and stumbling-block to others! I will hearken and hear what God the Lord will speak, O that it might be peace! If thou do

do not ſpeak it, none can; and when thou doſt, keep thy Servant from returning again to folly, leſt I make freſh work for an accuſing Conſcience, and give new matter to the Adverſary of my Soul.

The Aſſured Chriſtian's Reflection.

3. But thou (my Soul) enjoyeſt a double Mercy from thy bountiful God, who hath not only given thee a ſound Title, but alſo the clear evidence and knowledge thereof. I am gathering, and daily feeding upon the full-ripe fruits of Aſſurance, which grow upon the top Boughs of Faith, whilſt many of my poor Brethren drink their own Tears, and have their Teeth broken with Gravel-ſtones, Lord, thou haſt ſet my Soul upon her high places; but let me not exalt my ſelf, becauſe thou haſt exalted me; nor grow wanton becauſe I walk at liberty, leſt for the abuſe of ſuch precious liberty, thou clap my old chains upon me, and ſhut up my Soul again in Priſon.

The POEM.

MEN can't be quiet till they be aſſur'd
That their Eſtate is good, and well ſecur'd.
To able Counſel they their Deeds ſubmit,
Intreating them with care t' examine it;
Fearing ſome Clauſe an Enemy may wreſt,
Or find a flaw, whereby he may deveſt
Them, and their Children. O who can but ſee
How wiſe men in their Generation be!
But do they equal cares and fears expreſs
About their Everlaſting Happineſs?
In Spiritual things 'twould grieve ones heart to ſee
What careleſs Fools theſe careful Men can be.

They act like Men of common ſenſe bereaven,
Secure their Lands, and they'll truſt God for Heaven.
How many Caſes have you to ſubmit
To Lawyer's judgments? Miniſters may ſit
From Week to Week, and yet not ſee the Face
Of one that brings a Soul-concerning Caſe.
Yea, which is worſe; how ſeldom do you cry
To God for Counſel? Or beg him to try
Your hearts, and ſtricteſt inquiſition make
Into your ſtate, diſcover your miſtake?

O ſtupid Souls! Clouded with ignorance!
Is Chriſt and Heaven no fair Inheritance,
Compar'd with your's? Or is Eternity
A ſhorter term than your's, that you ſhould ply
The one ſo cloſe, and totally neglect
The other, as not worth your leaſt reſpect?
Perhaps the Devil whoſe plot from you's conceal'd,
Perſwades your Title's good, and firmly ſeal'd
By God's own Spirit; though you never found
One act of ſaving Grace to lay a ground
For that perſwaſion. Soul, he hath thee faſt,
Though he'll not let thee know it till the laſt.

Lord, waken Sinners, make them underſtand
'Twixt thee and them how rawly matters ſtand.
Give them no quiet reſt until they ſee
Their Souls ſecur'd better than Lands can be.

Occaſional Meditations

UPON

Birds, Beaſts, Trees, Flowers, Rivers, and other Objects.

MEDITATIONS on Birds.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the ſinging of a Nightingale.

WHO that hears ſuch various, raviſhing and exquiſite Melody, would imagine the Bird that makes it to be of ſo ſmall and contemptible a Body and Feather? Her charming voice ingaged not only mine attentive Ear, but my Feet alſo to make a nearer approach to that ſhady Buſh, in which that excellent Muſician ſat vailed; and the nearer I came, the ſweeter the melody ſtill ſeemed to be; but when I had deſcryed the Bird it ſelf, and found her to be little bigger, and no better Feather'd than a Sparrow, it gave my Thoughts the occaſion of this following Application.

This *Bird* ſeems to me the Lively *Emblem* of the formal Hypocrite, (1.) In that ſhe is more in

found than substance, a loud and excellent voice, but a little despicable Body; and it recall'd to my Thoughts the Story of *Plutarch*, who hearing a Nightingale, desired to have one killed to feed upon, not questioning but she would please the Palate as well as the Ear; but when the Nightingale was brought him, and he saw what a poor little Creature it was, Truly said he, thou art *vox & preterea nihil*, a meer voice and nothing else: So is the Hypocrite; did a Man hear him sometimes in more publick Duties and Discourses, O thinks he, what an excellent man is this! What a choice and rare Spirit is he of! But follow him home, observe him in his private Conversation and Retirements, and then you will judge *Plutarch*'s Note as applicable to him as the Nightingale. (2.) This Bird is observed to Charm most sweetly, and set her *Spirits* all on work, when she perceives she hath ingaged attention; so doth the *Hypocrite*, who lives and feeds upon the applause and commendation of his Admirers, and cares little for any of those Duties which bring in no returns of praise from Men; he is little pleased with a silent Melody and private pleasure betwixt God his own Soul.

Scire tuum nihil est nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.

Alas! His Knowledge is not worth a Pin,
If he proclaim not what he hath within.

He is more for the Theater than the Closet, and of such Christ saith, *Verily they have their reward.* (3.) Naturalists observe the Nightingale to be an ame-

ambitious Bird, that cannot endure to be out-vied by any, ſhe will rather chuſe to die than be excell'd; a notable inſtance whereof we have in the following pleaſant Poem, tranſlated out of *Strada*, concerning the *Nightingale* and a *Lutaniſt*.

Now the declining Sun did downward bend
From higher Heavens, and from his Locks did ſend
A milder flame, when near to Tyber's *Flow*
A Lutaniſt allayed his careful woe
With ſounding Charms, and in a greeny ſeat
Of ſhady Oak took ſhelter from the heat;
A Nightingale o're-heard him that did uſe
To ſojourn in the neighbour Groves, the Muſe
That fill'd the Place, the Syrene of the Wood
(Poor harmleſs Syrene) ſtealing near, ſhe ſtood
Cloſe lurking in the Leaves, attentively
Recording that unwonted Melody.
She con'd it to her ſelf, and every ſtrain
His Fingers play'd, her Throat return'd again.
The Lutaniſt perceiv'd an Anſwer ſent
From th'imitating Bird, and was content
To ſhew her Play more fully, then in haſte
He tries his Lute, and giving her a taſte
Of the enſuing Quarrel, nimbly beats
On all his Strings, as nimbly ſhe repeats,
And wildly ranging o're a Thouſand keys,
Sounds a ſhrill warning of her after lays:
With rowling Hand the Lutaniſt then plies
The trembling Threads, ſometimes in ſcornful wiſe
He bruſhes down the Strings, and ſtrikes them all
With one even ſtroke, then takes them ſeveral
And culls them o're again, his ſparkling Joints,
With buſie deſcant mincing on the Points, Reach

Reach back again with nimble touch, then stays,
The Bird replies, and Art with Art repays.
Sometimes as one unexpert, and in doubt
How she might weild her Voice, she draweth out
Her tone at large, and doth at first prepare
A solemn Strain, nor wear'd with winding air,
But with an equal pitch, and constant Throat,
Makes clear the passage for her gliding Note;
Then Cross-division diversly she plays,
And loudly chanting out her quickest lays
Poyses the sound, and with a quivering voice
Falls back again; he wondring how so choice,
So various harmony could Issue out
From such a little Throat, doth go about
Some harder Lessons, and with wondrous Art
Changing the strings, doth up the Treble dart,
And downward smite the Base, with painful stroke
He beats; and as the Trumpet doth provoke
Sluggards to fight, even so his wanton skill
With mingled discord joins the hoarse and shrill.
The Bird this also tunes, and whilst she cuts
Sharp notes with melting voice, and mingled puts
Measures of middle sound, then suddenly
She thunders deep, and jugs it inwardly
With gentle murmur, clear and dull she sings
By course, as when the Martial warning rings;
Believe't the Minstrel blusht, with angry mood
Inflam'd, (quoth he) thou Chantress of the Wood,
Either from thee I'll bear the prize away,
Or vanquisht break my Lute without delay.
Unimitable Accents then he strains,
His Hand flies on the strings, in one he chains
Far different numbers, chasing here and there,
And all the strings he labours every where;

Both flat and ſharp he ſtrikes, and ſtately grows
To prouder ſtrains, and backward as he goes
Doubly divides, and cloſing up his Lays
Like a full Quire, a ſhivering Conſort plays;
Then pauſing ſtood in expectation
Of his corrival, nor durſt anſwer on.
But ſhe, when practice long her Throat had whet,
Enduring not to yield, at once doth ſet
Her Spirits all to work, and all in vain;
For whilſt ſhe labours to expreſs again,
With natures ſimple voice, ſuch divers Keys,
With ſlender Pipes ſuch lofty Notes as theſe,
O're-matcht with high deſigns, o're-matcht with woe,
Juſt at the laſt encounter of her Foe
She faints, ſhe dies, falls on his Inſtrument
That conquer'd her, a fitting Monument.
So far even little Souls are driven on,
Struck with a vertuous Emulation.

And even as far are Hypocrites driven on by their Ambition and Pride, which is the Spur that provokes them in their Religious Duties.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the ſight of many ſmall Birds chirping about a dead Hawk.

HEaring a whole Quire of Birds chirping and twinking together, it engaged my Curioſity a little to enquire into the occaſion of that Convocation, which mine Eye quickly inform'd me of; for

for I perceived a dead Hawk in the Buſh, about which they made ſuch a noiſe, ſeeming to triumph at the death of their Enemy; and I could not blame them to ſing his Knell, who like a *Cannibal*, was wont to feed upon their living Bodies, tearing them limb from limb, and ſcaring them with his frightful appearance. This Bird which living was ſo formidable, being *dead* the *pooreſt* Wren or Titmouſe fears not to chirp or hop over. This brings to my thoughts the baſe and ignoble ends of the greateſt Tyrants and greedy Ingroſſers of the World, of whom (whilſt living) Men were more afraid than Birds of a Hawk, but dead became objects of contempt and ſcorn. The death of ſuch Tyrants is both inglorious and unlamented; *When the wicked periſh there is ſhouting*, Prov. 11. 10. which was exemplified to the Life at the Death of *Nero*, of whom the Poet thus ſings,

Cum mors crudelem rapuiſſet ſæva Neronem
Credibile eſt multos Romam agitaſſe jocos.

When cruel Nero *died th' Hiſtorian tells,*
How Rome *did mourn with Bonefires, Plays & Bells.*

Remarkable for contempt and ſhame have the ends of many Bloody Tyrants been; ſo *Pompey* the Great, of whom *Claudian* the Poet ſings.

Nudus paſcit aves jacet en qui poſſidet orbem
Exiguæ telluris inops ——————

Birds eat his Fleſh, lo now he cannot have,
Who rul'd the World, a ſpace to make a Grave.

The

The like is ſtoried of *Alexander* the Great, who
y unburied thirty days, and *William* the Con-
ueror, with many other ſuch Birds of prey;
hilſt a beneficial and holy Life is uſually cloſed
p in an honourable and much lamented Death.

For mine own Part, I wiſh I may ſo order my
onverſation in the World, that I may live when I
n dead in the Affections of the beſt, and leave
honourable Teſtimony in the Conſciences of the
orſt; that I may oppreſs none, do good to all,
nd ſay when I die, as good *Ambroſe* did, I am nei-
her aſhamed to live, nor afraid to die.

MEDIT. III.

pon the ſight of a Black-bird taking Sanctuary in a Buſh from a purſuing Hawk.

WHen I ſaw how hardly the poor Bird was put to it to ſave her ſelf from her Enemy, ho hover'd juſt over the Buſh in which ſhe was uttering and ſqueeking, I could not but haſten to lieve her, (pity and ſuccour being a due debt to e diſtreſſed) which when I had done, the Bird ould not depart from the Buſh, though her Ene-y were gone; this act of kindneſs was abundant-repaid by this Meditation, with which I return-to my walk. My Soul, like this Bird, was nce diſtreſſed, purſued, yea ſeized by Satan, who ad certainly made a prey of it, had not Jeſus hriſt been a Sanctuary to it in that hour of dan-er. How ready did I find him to receive my poor

Soul

Soul into his Protection? Then did he make good that ſweet Promiſe to my experience, *Thoſe that come unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* It call'd to mind that pretty and pertinent Story of the Philoſopher, who walking in the Fields, a Bird purſued by a Hawk, flew into his Boſom; he took her out, and ſaid, *Poor Bird, I will neither wrong thee, nor expoſe thee to thine Enemy, ſince thou cameſt unto me for refuge.* So tender, and more than ſo, is the Lord Jeſus to diſtreſſed Souls that come unto him. Bleſſed Jeſus! How ſhould I love and praiſe thee, glorifie and admire thee, for that great Salvation thou haſt wrought for me? If this Bird had fallen into the Claws of her Enemy, ſhe had been torn to pieces indeed and devoured, but then a few minutes had diſpatcht her, and ended all her pain and miſery; but had my Soul fallen into the hand of Satan, there had been no end of its miſery.

Would not this ſcared Bird be fluſht out of the Buſh, that ſecured her, though I had chaſed away her Enemy? And wilt thou (my Soul) ever be inticed or ſcared from Chriſt thy refuge? O let this for ever ingage thee to keep cloſe to Chriſt, and make me ſay with *Ezra*, and now, O Lord, ſince thou haſt given me ſuch a deliverance as this, ſhould I again break thy Commandments?

MED.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the ſight of divers Lennets intermingling with a Flock of Sparrows.

METhinks theſe Birds do fitly reſemble the Gaudy Courtiers, and the plain Peaſants; How ſpruce and richly adorned with ſhining and various coloured Feathers, (like Scarlet richly laid with Gold and Silver Lace) are thoſe How plainly clad, in a home-ſpun Countrey Ruſſet are theſe? *Fine Feathers* (ſaith our Proverb) *make proud Birds*; and yet the Feathers of the Sparrow are as uſeful and beneficial, both for warmth and flight, though not ſo gay and ornamental as the others; and if both were ſtript out of their Feathers, the Sparrow would prove the better Bird of the two; by which I ſee, that the greateſt worth doth not always lye under the fineſt Cloaths. And beſides, God can make mean and homely Garments as uſeful and beneficial to poor deſpiſed Chriſtians, as the ruffling and ſhining Garments of wanton Gallants are to them; and when God ſhall ſtrip Men out of all external Excellencies, theſe will be found to excel their glittering Neighbours, in true worth and excellency.

Little would a Man think ſuch rich Treaſures of Grace, Wiſdom, Humility, *&c.* lay under ſome Ruſſet Coats.

Sæpe ſub attrita latitat ſapientia veſte.

Under poor Garments more true worth may be
Than under Silks that whiſtle, Who but he?

Whilſt

Whilst on the other side, the Heart of the wicked (as *Solomon* hath observ'd) is little worth, how much soever his Cloaths be worth. Alas! It falls out too frequently among us, as it doth with *Men* in the *Indies*, who walk over the rich Veins of Gold and Silver Oar, which lyes hid under a ragged and barren Surface, and know it not. For my own part, I desire not to value any Man by what is extrinsical and worldly, but by that true internal excellency of Grace, which makes the Face to shine in the Eyes of God and good Men: I would contemn a vile Person, tho' never so glorious in the Eye of the World; but honour such as fear the Lord, how sordid and despicable soever to appearance.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the sight of a Robbin-red-breast picking up a Worm from a Mole-hill, then Raising.

OBserving the *Mole* working industriously beneath, and the *Bird* watching so intently above; I made a stand to observe the issue. When in a little time the *Bird* descends and seizes upon a *Worm*, which I perceived was crawling apace from the *Enemy* below that hunted her, but fell to the share of another, which from above waited for her. My thoughts presently suggested these *Meditations* from that occasion; methought this poor Worm seem'd to be the Emblem of my poor Soul, which is more endangered by its own Lusts of Pride and Covetousnes

Covetouſneſs, than this Worm was by the Mole nd Bird; my Pride, like the aſpiring Bird, watches or it above; my Covetouſneſs, like this ſubter-anean Mole, digging for it beneath. Poor Soul! What a ſad *Dilemma* art thou brought to! If thou o down into the *Caverns* of this Earth, there thou rt a prey to thy Covetouſneſs that hunts thee; nd if thou aſpire, or but creep upward, there thy ride waits to enſnare thee. Diſtreſſed Soul! Whither wilt thou go? Aſcend thou mayſt, not by vain elation, but by a heavenly converſation, be-ide which, there is no way for thy preſervation; *he way of Life is above to the Wiſe*, &c.

Again, I could not but obſerve the accidental be-nefit this *poor* harmleſs *Bird* obtain'd by the labour f the *Mole*, who *hunting* intentionally for her ſelf, nburroughed and ferrited out this Worm for the ird, who poſſibly was hungry enough, and could ot have been relieved for this time, but by the *Mole*, the fruit of whoſe labours ſhe now feeds up-n. Even thus the *Lord* oft-times makes good his ord to his People: *The wealth of the wicked is laid p for the juſt.* And again, *The earth ſhall help the oman.* This was fully exemplified in *David*, to hom *Nabal*, that churliſh Muckworm, ſpeaks all n Poſſeſſives. *Shall I take my bread*, &c. *and give it o one I know not whom?* And yet *David* reaps the uit of all the pains and toyl of *Nabal* at laſt. Let never incourage me to idleneſs, that God ſome-imes gives his *People* the fruit of others ſweat; but *Providence* reduce me to neceſſity, and diſable me rom helping my ſelf; I doubt not then but it will rovide Inſtruments to do it. The Bird was an ungry and could not dig.

MEDI-

MEDIT. VI.

Upon the shooting of two Finches fighting in the Air.

HOW soon hath death ended the quarrel betwixt these two little Combatants! Had they agreed better, they might have lived longer; 'twas their own contention that gave both the opportunity and provocation of their Death; and though living they could not, yet being dead they can lye quietly together in my hand.

Fooliſh Birds, was it not enough that Birds of Prey watched to devour them, but they muſt peck and ſcratch one another? Thus have I ſeen the Birds of Paradice (Saints I mean) tearing and wounding each other, like ſo many Birds of Prey, and by their unchriſtian Conteſts giving the occaſion of their common Ruin; yea, and that not only when at liberty, as theſe were, but when engaged alſo; and yet, as one well obſerves, if ever Chriſtians will agree, 'twill either be in a Priſon, or in Heaven; for in a Priſon their quarrelſome Luſts lie low, and in Heaven they ſhall be utterly done away.

But O! What pity is it that thoſe who ſhall agree ſo perfectly in Heaven, ſhould bite and devour each other upon Earth? That it ſhould be ſaid of them, as one ingeniouſly obſerved, who ſaw their Carkaſes lie together, as if they had lovingly embraced each other, who fell together by a Duel, *Quanta amicitia ſee invicem amplectuntur, qui mutua & implacabili inimicitia perierunt?*

Imbra-

Imbracing one another now they lie,
Who by each others bloody Hands did die.

Or as he ſaid, who obſerved how quietly and peaceably the Duſt and Bones, even of Enemies, did lie together in the Grave; *Non tanta vivi pace conjuncti eſſetis*; you did not live together ſo peaceably. If Conſcience of Chriſt's Command will not, yet the Conſideration of common Safety ſhould powerfully perſwade to Unity and Amity.

MEDIT. VII.

Upon the ſinging of a blind Finch *by Night.*

A Dear Friend, who was a great Obſerver of the Works of God in nature, told me, That being entertain'd with a ſight of many Rarities at a Friend's Houſe in *London*; among other things, his Friends ſhewed him a *Finch*, whoſe Eyes being put out, would frequently ſing, even at midnight. This Bird, in my Opinion, is the lively Emblem of ſuch careleſs and unconcerned Perſons as the Prophet deſcribes, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6. Who chant to the Viol, when a diſmal night of trouble and affliction hath overſhadowed the Church. You would have thought it ſtrange to have heard this Bird ſing in the Night, when all others are in a deep ſilence, except the Owl, an unclean Bird, and the Nightingale, which

which before we made the Emblem of the Hypocrite. And as strange it is that any, except the Prophane and Hypocritical, should so unseasonably express their *Mirth* and *Jollity*; that any of *Sion's* Children should live in Pleasure, whilst she her self lies in Tears. The People of God, in *Psal.* 137. tell us in what postures of Sorrow they sate even like Birds; with their Heads under their Wings, during the night of their captivity. *How shall we sing the Lord's Song in a strange Land?* 'Tis like enough, such as can sing and chant in the Night of the Church's Trouble, have well feathered their Nests in the Days of her Prosperity; However, let them know, that God will turn their unseasonable mirth into a sadder Note; and those that now sit sad and silent, shall shortly sing for Joy of Heart, when the Winter is past, the Rain over and gone, the Flowers appear again upon the Earth, and the time of the Singing of Birds is come.

MEDIT. VIII.

Upon the comparing of two Birds Nests.

'Tis pretty to observe the Structure and Commodiousness of the Habitations of these little Architects, who though they act not by Reason and Counsel, but only by natural Instinct, yet Reason it self could hardly have contrived a neater Building of such simple materials

How

How neatly hath the Thruſh ceiled or plaiſtred his Neſt, with admirable Art and Induſtry? How warmly hath the *Finch* matted his? And both well fenced againſt the Injury of the Weather.

How comfortably hath Nature provided convenient Habitations, for theſe weak and tender young Ones, who have warm Lodging, and variety of Proviſions hourly brought them, without their Care or Pains? This triffling Object ſuggeſts to my Thoughts a more excellent and ſerious Contemplation, even the wonderful and unparallell'd Abaſement of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who for my ſake voluntarily ſubmitted himſelf to a more deſtitute and neglected State than theſe Birds of the Air; for *Mat.* 8. 20. he ſaith, *The Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the Air have neſts; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head.*

(Vulpibus in ſaltu rupes exciſa latebras
Præbet & aereis avibus dat ſilva quietem:
Aſt hominis Nato nullis ſuccedere tectis
Eſt licitum———————

Heinſ. in loc.

The craggy Rock to Foxes holes affords,
The pleaſant Woods, a reſting place to Birds:
For Chriſt no fixed Habitation's found,
But what was borrowed, or the naked ground.

O melting Conſideration! That the glorious Son of God, *Joh.* 1. 14. *The Lord of Glory,* Jam. 2. 1.

Jam. 2. 1. *The brightneſs of his Father's Glory.* Heb. 1. 3. *Who was rich,* 2 Cor. 8. 9. *And thought it no robbery to be equal with God,* Phil. 2. 8. who from all *eternity* was infinitely and ineffably *delighting and rejoycing in the boſom of his Father,* Prov. 8. 30. That he, I ſay, ſhould manifeſt himſelf *in fleſh,* 2 Tim. 3. 16. Yea, *in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh,* Rom. 8. 3. that is, in fleſh that had the marks and effects of ſin upon it, as hunger, thirſt, pain, wearineſs and mortality; and not only ſo, but to chuſe ſuch a State of outward meanneſs and poverty, never being poſſeſſed of a houſe in this World; but living as a ſtranger in other Men's Houſes, and ſtooping in this reſpect to a lower Condition than the very Birds of the Air, and all this for Enemies. O let it work both admiration and thankfulneſs in my Soul! my Body is better accommodated than the Body of my Lord. Dear Jeſus! by how much the viler thou madest thy ſelf for me, by ſo much the dearer ſhalt thou be to me.

Quanto pro me vilior, tanto mihi charior. Bern.

MEDIT. IX.

Upon the early ſinging of Birds.

HOw am I reproved of Sluggiſhneſs by the watchful Birds! which chearfully entertain the very dawning of the Morning, with their chearful and delightful warblings! they ſet their litt

little Spirits all a-work betimes, whilſt my nobler Spirits are bound with the Bonds of ſoft and downy Slumbers. For ſhame my Soul! Suffer not that Publican ſleep to ſeize ſo much of thy time, yea, thy beſt and freſheſt time; reprove and chide thy ſluggiſh Body, as a good Biſhop once did, when upon the ſame occaſion he ſaid, *Surrexerunt paſſeres, & ſtertunt Pontifices.*

The early chirping Sparrows may reprove
Such lazy Biſhops as their Beds do love.

Of many Sluggards it may be ſaid, as *Tully* ſaid of *Verres*, the Deputy of *Sicily*, *Quod nunquam ſolem nec orientem, nec occidentem viderat*; that he never ſaw the Sun riſing, being in Bed after, nor ſetting, being in Bed before.

'Tis pity, that Chriſtians, of all Men, ſhould ſuffer ſleep to cut ſuch large Thongs out of ſo narrow a Hide, as their time on Earth is. But, alas! It is not ſo much early riſing, as a wiſe improving thoſe freſh and free Hours with God, that will enrich the Soul; elſe, as our Proverb ſaith, *A Man may be early up, and never the near*; yea, far better it is to be found in Bed ſleeping, than to be up doing nothing, or that which is worſe than nothing. O my Soul! Learn to preposſeſs thy ſelf every morning with the Thoughts of God, and ſuffer not thoſe freſh and ſweet Operations of thy Mind, to be proſtituted to Earthly things; for that is experimentally true, which one in this Caſe hath pertinently obſerved; that if the World get the ſtart of Religion

Mr. Caſe in Epiſt. to the Morn. Lect.

in the Morning, it will be hard for Religion to overtake it all the Day after.

MEDIT. X.

Upon the haltering of Birds with a Grain of Hair.

OBſerving in a ſnowy Seaſon, how the poor hungry Birds were haltred and drawn in by a Grain of Hair cunningly caſt over their Heads, whilſt poor Creatures they were buſily feeding, and ſuſpected no danger; and even whilſt their Companions were drawn away from them, one after another, all the interruption it gave the reſt was only for a minute or two, whilſt they ſtood peeping into that hole through which their Companions were drawn, and then fell to their Meat again as buſily as before. I could not chuſe but ſay, *Even thus ſurprizingly doth Death ſteal upon the Children of Men, whilſt they are wholly intent upon the Cares and Pleaſures of this Life, not at all ſuſpecting its ſo near approach.* Theſe Birds ſaw not the Hand that enſnared them, nor do they ſee the Hand of Death plucking them one after another into the Grave.

Omnibus obſcuras injecit illa manus.

Ovid.

Death's ſteps are ſwift, and yet no noiſe it makes;
Its hand unſeen, but yet moſt ſurely takes.

And even as the ſurviving Birds for a little time ſeemed to ſtand affrighted, peeping after their Companions, and then as buſie as ever to their

their Meat again: Juſt ſo it fares with the careleſs inconſiderate World, who ſee others daily dropping into Eternity round about them, and for the preſent are a little ſtartled, and will look into the Grave after their Neighbours, and then fall as buſily to their Earthly Imployments and Pleaſures again as ever, till their own turn comes.

I know, my God, that I muſt die as well as others; but, O let me not die as do others, let me ſee death before I feel it, and conquer it before it kill me; let it not come as an Enemy upon my back, but rather let me meet it as a Friend half way: Die I muſt, but let me lay up that good Treaſure before I go, *Mat.* 6. 19. Carry with me a good Conſcience when I go, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 7. And leave behind me a good Example when I am gone, and then let Death come and welcome!

Meditations upon BEASTS.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the clogging a ſtraying Beaſt.

HAD this *Bullock* contented himſelf, and remained quietly within his own bounds, his Owner had never put ſuch an heavy Clog upon

his Neck; but I ſee the prudent Husbandman chuſes rather to keep him with this Clog, than loſe him for want of one. What this Clog is to him, that is Affliction and Trouble to me; had my Soul kept cloſe with God in Liberty and Proſperity, he would never thus have clogged me with Adverſity; yea, and happy were it for me, if I might ſtray from God no more, who hath thus clogged me with preventive Afflictions. If with *David*, I might ſay, *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now I have kept thy Word*, Pſalm 119. 67: O my Soul! 'Tis better for thee, to have thy Pride clogged with Poverty, thy Ambition with Reproach, thy carnal Expectancies with conſtant Diſappointments, than to be at Liberty, to run from God and Duty.

'Tis true, I am ſometimes as weary of theſe Troubles, as this poor Beaſt is of the Clog he draws after him, and often wiſh my ſelf rid of them; but yet, if God ſhould take them off, for ought I know I might have cauſe to wiſh them on again, to prevent a greater Miſchief. 'Tis ſtoried of *Baſil*, that for many Years he was ſorely afflicted with an inveterate Head-ach, (that was his Clog) he often prayed for the removal of it, at laſt God removed it; but inſtead thereof he was ſorely exerciſed with the motions and temptations of Luſt, which when he perceived, he as earneſtly deſired his Head-ach again, to prevent a greater Evil. Lord! If my Corruptions may be prevented by my affliction, I refuſe not to be clogged with them; but my Soul rather deſires thou wouldſt haſten the

the time when I ſhall be for ever freed from them both.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the Love of a Dog to his Maſter.

HOW many weary ſteps through mire and dirt hath this poor Dog followed my Horſe's Heels to day? And all this for a very poor reward, for all he gets by it at night, is but Bones and Blows, yet will he not leave my Company, but is content upon ſuch hard Terms, to travel with me from day to day.

O my Soul! What conviction and ſhame may this leave upon thee? Who art oftentimes even weary of following thy Maſter *Chriſt*, whoſe Rewards and Incouragements of Obedience are ſo incomparably ſweet and ſure. I cannot beat back this Dog from following me, but every inconſiderable trouble is enough to diſcourage me in the way of my Duty. Ready I am to reſolve as that Scribe did, Mat. 8. 19. *Maſter, I will follow thee whitherſoever thou goeſt*; But how doth my Heart faulter when I muſt encounter with the difficulties of the way? O! Let me make a whole Heart choice of Chriſt for my Portion and Happineſs! And then I ſhall never leave him, nor turn back from following him, though the preſent difficulties were much more, and the preſent Incouragements much leſs.

MEDIT. III.

Upon the fighting of two Rams.

TAking notice how furiouſly theſe Sheep, which by nature are mild and gentle, did yet like Bulls puſh each other, taking their advantage by going back to meet with a greater Rage and Fury: Methought I ſaw in this a plain Emblem of the unchriſtian Conteſts and Animoſities which fall out amongſt them that call themſelves the People of God, who are in Scripture alſo ſtiled Sheep, for their meekneſs and innocency, and yet thro' the remaining corruptions that are in them, thus do they puſh each other; (as one long ſince complained) *non ſecus ac*

Cum duo converſis inimica in prælia tauri,
Frontibus incurrent———

Shall Chriſtians one another wound and puſh,
Like furious Bulls, when they together ruſh?

The fighting of theſe Sheep doth in two reſpects notably comport with the ſinful Practices of contending Chriſtians, 1. That in this fight they engage with their Heads one againſt another; and what are they but thoſe Head-notions, or *Oppoſitions of Sciences*, falſly ſo called, that have made ſo many Broils and Uproars in the Chriſtian World? O! What claſhings have theſe heady Opinions cauſed in the Churches? Firſt Heads,

Heads, and then Hearts have claſhed. *Chriſtians* have not diſtinguiſhed betwixt *Adverſarius litis, & perſonæ*; an Adverſary to the *Opinion*, and to the *Perſon*; but dipt their Tongues and Pens in Vinegar and Gall, ſhamefully aſperſing and reproaching one another, becauſe their Underſtandings were not caſt into one Mould, and their Heads all of a bigneſs. But, 2. That which Country-men obſerve from the fighting of Sheep, *That it preſages foul and ſtormy Weather*, is much more certainly conſequent upon the fighting of Chriſt's Sheep. Do theſe claſh and puſh? Surely *it is an infallible Prognoſtick of an enſuing Storm*, Mal. 4. 6.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the Catching of a Horſe in a fat Paſture.

WHen this Horſe was kept in poor ſhort Leas, where he had much Scope, but little Graſs, how gentle and tractable was he then? He would not only ſtand quiet to be taken, but come to hand of his own accord, and follow me up and down the Field for a Cruſt of Bread, or handful of Oats; but ſince I turned him into this fat Paſture, he comes no more to me, nor will ſuffer me to come near him; but throws up his heels wantonly againſt me, and flies from me, as if I were rather his *Enemy* than *Benefactor*. In this I behold the Carriage of my own Heart towards God, who the more he hath

done for me, the ſeldomer doth he hear from me; in a low and afflicted State, how tractable is my Heart to Duty? Then it comes to the Foot of God voluntarily; but in an exalted Condition, how wildly doth my Heart run from God and Duty? With this ungrateful requital God faulted his own People, *Jer.* 2. 31. teachable and tractable in the *Wilderneſs*, but when fatted in that rich Paſture *Canaan*, Then, *We are Lords, we will come no more to thee.* How ſoon are all God's former Benefits forgotten? And how often is that ancient Obſervation verified, even in his own People?

Μετὰ τὴν δόσιν τάχισα γηρᾶσκει χάρις.

Poſt munera cito conſeneſcit gratia.

No ſooner do we Gifts on ſome beſtow,
But preſently our Gifts Gray-headed grow.

But that's a bad Tenant, that will maintain a Suit at Law againſt his Landlord, with his own Rent, and a bad Heart that will fight againſt God with his own Mercies. I wiſh it may be with my Heart, as it is reported to be with the Waters in the Kingdom of *Congo*, that are never ſo ſweet to the Taſte, as when the Tide is at the higheſt.

MEDIT.

MEDITAT. V.

Upon the Hunting of a Deer.

THE full-mouthed cry of theſe Dogs which from the morning have hunted this poor tired Deer, which is now no longer able to ſtand before them, but is compaſſed round with them, who thriſt for, and will preſently ſuck her Blood; brings to my Thoughts the Condition and State of *Jeſus Chriſt*, in the days of his Fleſh, who was thus hunted from place to place by blood-thriſty Enemies. Upon this very account, the 22. *Pſal.* which treats of his Death, is inſcribed with the Title of *Aljeleth Shabar*, which ſignifies the *Hind of the Morning*, and fully imports the ſame Notion, which this occaſion preſented me with; for look, as the *Hind or Deer*, which is intended to be run down that day, is rouzed by the Dogs early in the morning. So was Chriſt, in the very morning of his Infancy, by bloody *Herod*, and that cruel Pack confederated with him. Thus was he chaſed from place to place, till that was fulfilled which was prophetically written of him in *Verſ.* 16. of the fore-cited *Pſal*; *For Dogs have compaſſed me about, the aſſembly of the wicked have incloſed me*; *they pierced my hands and my feet.*

And canſt thou expect, O my Soul! to fare better then he did, or eſcape the Rage of bloody men? Surely, if that Spirit of Chriſt dwell in thee; if his Holineſs

have favoured thee, these Dogs will wind it, and give thee chase too; they go upon the Scent of Holiness still, and would hunt to destruction every one, in whom there is *aliquid Christi*, any thing of Christ, if the gracious Providence of the Lord did not sometimes rate them off: For it is no less a pleasure, which some wicked ones take in hunting the people of God, than what *Claudian* the Poet observes men use to take in hunting wild Beasts.

Venator defessa thero quum membra reponit
Mens tamen ad Sylvas, & sua lustra redit.

Whilst weary Huntsmen in the night do sleep,
Their Fancies in the Woods, still hunting keep.

Lord! should I with the Hypocrite decline the Profession and Practice of Holiness, to escape the Rage of persecuting Enemies, at what time they cease, my own Conscience would begin to hunt me like a Blood-hound; let me rather chuse to be chased by men than God, to flee before pursuing Enemies, than be dogged from day to day with a guilty Conscience.

Meditations upon TREES

MEDIT. I.

Upon the fall of Bloſſoms, nipt by a froſty Morning.

BEholding in an early Spring, Fruit-trees embоſſed with beautiful Bloſſoms of various Colours, which breathed forth their delicious Odours into the circumambient Air, and adorned the Branches on which they grew, like ſo many rich Jewels, or glittering Pendents; and further obſerving how theſe perfumed Bloſſoms dropt off, being bitten with the Froſt, and diſcoloured all the Ground as if a ſhower of Snow had fallen; I ſaid within my ſelf, theſe ſweet and early Bloſſoms are not unlike my ſweet and early Affections to the Lord, in the days of my firſt acquaintance with him. O! What fervent Love, panting Deſires, and heavenly Delights beautified my Soul in thoſe days! The odoriferous Scent of the ſweeteſt Bloſſoms, the Morning breath of the moſt fragrant Flowers, hath not half that ſweetneſs with which thoſe my firſt Affections were enriched. O happy time! Thrice pleaſant ſpring! My Soul hath it ſtill in remembrance, and is humbled within me; for theſe alſo were but Bloſſoms which now are nipt and faded, that flouriſh is gone; my Heart is

like

like the Winter's Earth, because thy Face, Lord, is to me like a Winter Sun. *Awake, O North Wind! and come South Wind, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out; then let my Beloved come into his Garden, and eat his pleasant Fruit.*

MEDIT. II.

Upon the Knitting or Setting of Fruit.

I Have often observed, that when the Blossoms of a Tree set and knit, though the flourish thereof be gone, and nothing but the bare Rudiment of the expected Fruit be left; yet then the Fruit is much better secured from the danger of Frosts and Winds, than whilst it remained in the Flower or Blossom; for now it hath past one of those *Critical Periods*, in which so many Trees miscarry and lose their Fruit. And methought this *Natural Observation* fairly led me to this *Theological Proposition: That good Motion and holy Purposes in the Soul, are never secured and past their most dangerous* Crisis, *till they be turned into fixed Resolutions, and answerable Executions, which is as the knitting and setting of them.*

Upon this Proposition my melting thoughts thus dilated, happy had it been for thee, my Soul! had all the blessed Motions of the Spirit been thus knit and fixed in thee. Oh, how have mine Affections blown and budded under the warm Beams of the Gospel! But a chill blast from

from the Cares, Troubles and delights of the World without, and the Vanity and Deadness of the Heart within have blasted all; my Goodness hath been but as a Morning Dew, or early Cloud that vanisheth away. And even of Divine Ordinances I may say, what is said of Humane Ordinances, *They have perished in the using.* A Blossom is but *fructus imperfectus, & ordinabilis*, an imperfect thing in it self, and something in order to Fruit; a good Motion and holy Purpose is but *opus imperfectum, & ordinable*, an imperfect Work, in order to a compleat Work of the Spirit; when that *primus impetus*, those first Motions were strong upon my Heart, had I then pursued them in the force and vigor of them, how many Difficulties might I have overcome? Revive thy Work, O Lord! And give not to my Soul a miscarrying womb, or dry Breasts.

MEDIT. III.

Upon the sight of a fair spreading Oak.

WHat a lofty flourishing Tree is here? It seems rather to be a little Wood, than a single Tree; every Limb thereof having the Dimensions and Branches of a Tree in it; and yet as great as it is, it was once but a little slip, which one might pull up with two Fingers; this vast Body was contained vertually, and potentially in a small Acron. Well then, I will never despise

deſpiſe the day of ſmall Things, nor deſpair of arriving to an Eminency of Grace, though at preſent it be but as a bruiſed Reed, and the things that are in me be ready to die. As things in Nature, ſo the things of the Spirit grow up to their fulneſs and perfection by ſlow and inſenſible degrees. The famous and heroical Acts of the moſt renowned Believers, were ſuch as themſelves could not once perform or it may be think they ever ſhould. Great things both in Nature and Grace, come from ſmall and contemptible Beginnings.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the ſight of many Sticks lodged in the Branches of a choice Fruit-Tree.

HOw is this Tree batter'd with Stones, and loaded with Sticks that have been thrown at it? Whilſt thoſe that grow about it, being barren, or bearing harſher Fruit, eſcape untouched! Surely, if its Fruit had not been ſo good, its uſage had not been ſo bad: And yet it is affirmed, That ſome Trees, as the Wallnut, &c. bear the better, for being thus bruiſed and battered.

Even thus it fares in both reſpects with the beſt of Men; the more Holy, the more envied and perſecuted, every one that paſſes by will have a fling at them. Methinks I ſee, how Devils and wicked Men walk round about the Peo-

ple

ple of God whom he hath encloſed in his Arms of Power, like ſo many Boys about an Orchard, whoſe Lips water to have a fling at them. But God turns all the Stones of Reproach into preci-ous Stones to his People; they bear the better for being thus batter'd. And in them is that ancient Obſervation verified.

Creſcunt virtutum palmæ, creſcuntque Coronæ
Mutantur mundi prælia, pace Dei.

The palms and Crowns of vertue thus increaſe;
Thus perſecution's turned into Peace.

Let me be but fruitful to God in Holineſs, and ever abounding in the Work of the Lord, and then whilſt Devils and Men are flinging at me, ei-ther by Hand or Tongue-Perſecutions, I will ſing amidſt them all with the Divine Poet.

What open Force, or hidden Charm
Can blaſt my Fruit, or bring me harm
While the Incloſure is thine Arm.

Herb. Poem. *p.* 125.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the gathering of choice Fruit from a ſcrubbed unpromiſing Tree.

WOuld any Man think to find ſuch rare de-licious Fruit upon ſuch an unworthy Tree to appearance as this is? I would rather have expected the moſt delicious Fruit from the moſt

most handsome and flourishing Trees; but I see I must neither judge the worth of Trees or Men, by their external form and appearance. This is not the first time I have been deceived in judging by that Rule; under fair and promising out-sides I have found nothing of worth, and in many deformed despicable Bodies, I have found precious and richly furnished Souls. The Sap and Juice of this scrubbed Tree is concocted into rare and excellent Fruits, whilst the Juice and Sap of some other fair, but barren Trees serves only to keep them from rotting, which is all the use that many Souls which dwell in beautiful Bodies serve for; they have (as one saith) *anima n pro sale*; their Souls are but Salt to their Bodies. Or thus,

The only use to which their Souls do serve,
Is but like Salt, their Bodies to preserve.

If God have given me a sound Soul in a sound Body, I have a double *Mercy* to bless him for; but whether my Body be vigorous and beautiful or not, yet let my Soul be so: For as the esteem of this Tree, so the esteem and true honour of every man rises rather from his fruitfulness and usefulness, than from his shape and form.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon an excellent, but irregular Tree.

SEeing a Tree grow somewhat irregular, in a very neat Orchard, I told the Owner it was pity that Tree should stand there; and that if it were

were mine I would root it up, and thereby reduce the Orchard to an exact uniformity. It was replied to this purpose, *That he rather regarded the Fruit than the Form*; and that this slight conveniency was abundantly preponderated by a more considerable advantage. This Tree, *said he*, which you would root up, hath yielded me more Fruit than many of those Trees which have nothing else to commend them, but their regular Situation. I could not but yield to the Reason of this Answer; and could wish it had been spoken so loud, that all our uniformity Men had heard it, who will not stick to root up many hundred of the best Bearers in the Lord's Orchard, because they stand not in an exact order with other more conformable, but less beneficial Trees, who do *perdere substantiam propter accidentia*, destroy the Fruit, to preserve the Form.

Not much unlike such foolish Men are those
That strive for Shadows, and the Substance lose.

Meditations upon a Garden.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the new Modelling of a Garden.

A Gentlewoman who had lately seen a neat and curious Garden, returns to her own with a greater dislike of it than ever; resolves to

to new-model the whole Plat, and reduce it to a better Form, is now become so curious and neat, that not a Weed or Stone is suffered in it, but all must lie in exquisite order; and whatever Ornament she had observed in her Neighbours, she is now restless till she see it in her own.

Happy were it, thought I, if in an holy Emulation, every one would thus endeavour to rectifie the Disorders of their own Conversation, by the excellent Graces they behold in the more heavenly and regular Lives of others. Some Christians there are (I wish their number were greater) whose Actions lie in such a comely and beautiful order, that few of their Neighbours can look upon their Examples without Self-conviction and shame; but few are so happy to be provoked unto Self-reformation by such rare Patterns. I see it is much easier to pull up many Weeds out of a Garden, than one Corruption out of the Heart; and to procure an hundred Flowers to adorn a Knot, than one Grace to beautifie the Soul. 'Tis more natural to corrupt man to envy, than to imitate the Spiritual Excellencies of others.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the pulling up of a Leek.

A White head and a green tail! How well doth this resemble an old wanton Lover! Whose green youthful Lusts are not extinguish-

ed,

ed, though his white head declares that Nature s almoſt ſo. Gray Hairs ſhould be always match'd with grave Deportments, and the Sins of Youth ſhould rather be the Griefs than Pleaſures of old Age. 'Tis ſad when the Sins of the Soul, like the Diſeaſes of the Body, grow ſtronger, as Nature grows weaker: And it recals to my mind that ancient Obſervation of *Menander*.

Γέρων ἐρασὴς ἐχάτη κακὴ τύχη.

Senex amore captus, ultimum malum.

It is the worſt of Evils to behold
Strong youthful Luſts to rage in one that's old.

'Tis a thouſand pities, that thoſe who have one Foot in the Grave, would live as if the other were in Hell! That their Luſts ſhould be ſo lively, when their Bodies are three parts dead. Such ſinful Practices bring upon them more contempt and ſhame, than their hoary Heads and reverend Faces can procure them Honour:

Magna fuit capitis quondam reverentia cani,
Inque ſuo pretio ruga ſenilis erat.

Ovid. 5. Faſt.

Gray Hairs, and aged Wrinckles, did of old
Procure more reverence than Bags of Gold.

But alas! How little reſpect or reverence can the hoary Head obtain amongſt wiſe Men, except it be found in the way of Righteouſneſs? I think, the loweſt eſteem is too much for an old Servant of the Devil; and the higheſt Honour little enough for an ancient and faithful Servant of Chriſt.

MEDIT.

MEDIT. III.

Upon a heedless Tread in a curious Garden.

PAssing through the small Divisions of a curious Knot, which was richly adorned with rare Tulips, and other beautiful Flowers, I was very careful to shun those Flowers, which indeed had no other worth to commend them, but their exquisite Colours, and unadvisedly trod upon and spoiled an excellent choice Herb, which though it grew obscurely, yet had rare Physical Vertues in it.

When I was made sensible of the involuntary Trespass I had committed, I thought I could scarcely make the Owner a better Compensation, than by telling him, that herein (though against my will) I did but tread in the Footsteps of the greatest part of the World, who are very careful (as I was) to keep their due distance from splendid, though worthless Gallants; meanwhile trampling upon, and crushing under foot, the obscure, but most precious Servants of God in the World. As little do they heed these most excellent Persons, as I did this precious Herb.

Summa ingenia in occulto sæpe latent,
saith *Plautus:*

Rare Wits and Herbs sometimes do sculk and shrink
In such blind holes, as one would little think.

For my own part, I desire to tread upon no man with the Foot of Contempt and Pride much

much leſs upon any good Man; and that I may not, it concerns me to look before I ſtep, I mean, to conſider before I cenſure: Had done ſo by this rare Herb, I had never hurt it.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon a withered Poſey taken up in the way.

FInding, in my walk, a Poſey of once ſweet and fragrant, but now dry and withered Flowers, which I ſuppoſe to be thrown away by one that had formerly worn it: Thus, ſaid I, doth the unfaithful World uſe its Friends, when Providence hath blaſted and withered them; whilſt they are rich and honourable, they will put them into their Boſoms, as the Owner of this Poſey did, whilſt it was freſh and fragrant; and as eaſily throw them away, as uſeleſs and worthleſs things, when thus they come to be withered. Such uſage as this *Petronius* long ſince complained of.

Cum fortuna manet vultum ſervatis amici,
Cum cecidit turpi vertitis ora fuga. (i. e.)

Are they in Honour? Then we ſmile like Friends,
And with their Fortunes all our Friendſhip ends.

But this looſe and deceitful Friendſhip ſtinks ſo odiouſly in the very Noſtrils of Nature, that

a *Heathen Poet* ſeverely taxes, and condemns it a moſt unworthy of a Man.

Turpe ſequi caſum, & fortunæ cedere, amicum
Et niſi ſit felix eſſe negare ſuum. (i. e.)

'Tis baſe to change with Fortune, and deny
A faithful Friend, becauſe in Poverty.

And is this indeed the Friendſhip of the World? Doth it thus uſe them whom once it honoured? Then Lord! Let me never ſeek its Friendſhip. O, let me eſteem the Smiles and Honours of Men leſs, and thy Love and Favour more. Thy Love is indeed unchangeable, being pure, free, and built upon nothing that is mutable; thou never ſerveſt thy Friends as the World doth its Darlings.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the ſuddain withering of a Roſe.

BEing with my Friend in a Garden, we gathered each of us a Roſe; he handled his tenderly, ſmell'd to it but ſeldom and ſparingly, I always kept it to my Noſe, or ſqueezed it in my Hand, whereby in a very ſhort time it loſt both colour and ſweetneſs, but his ſtill remained as ſweet and fragrant as if it had been growing upon its own root. Theſe Roſes, ſaid I, are the true Emblems of the beſt and ſweeteſt Creature-enjoyments in the World; which being moderately

noderately and cautiouſly uſed and enjoyed may or a long time yield ſweetneſs to the poſſeſſor f them; but if once the Affections ſeize too greedily upon them, and ſqueeze them too ard, they quickly wither in our Hands, and ve loſe the comfort of them; and that either hrough the Soul's ſurfeiting upon them, or the Lord's righteous and juſt removal of them, beauſe of the exceſs of our Affections to them; Earthly comforts like Pictures, ſhew beſt at a due iſtance. It was therefore a good Saying of *Homer*, Ἀνδρὶ ξεινόδοκῳ, &c.

Mihi nunquam is placet hoſpes
Qui valde preterque modum odit vel amat.

I like him not who at the rate
Of all his might doth love or hate.

'Tis a point of excellent Wiſdom to keep the olden Bridle of Moderation upon all the Affectiins we exerciſe upon Earthly things, and never o ſlip thoſe Reins, unleſs when they move towards God, in whoſe Love there is no danger f Exceſs.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon the ſuddain withering of beautiful Flowers.

HOW freſh and orient did theſe Flowers lately appear, when being daſh'd over with the Morning Dew, they ſtood in all their Pride

Pride and Glory, breathing out their delicious Odours, which perfumed the Air round about them, but now are daver'd and ſhrivell'd up and have neither any deſirable Beauty, or Savour in them.

So vain a thing is the admired Beauty of Creatures, which ſo captivates the Hearts, and exerciſes a pleaſing Tyranny over the Affections of vain man, yet is as ſuddenly blaſted as the Beauty of a Flower.

Forma bonum fragile eſt quantumque accedit a
Fit minor & ſpacio carpitur ipſa ſuo. (*annos*
Nec ſemper violæ, nec ſemper lilia florent,
Et riget amiſſa ſpina relicta roſa.
Tempus erit quo vos ſpeculum vidiſſe pigebit,
Jam veniunt rugæ quæ tibi torpus arent, &c.
Ovid. de Art

How frail is Beauty? In how ſhort a time
It fades! Like Roſes, which have paſt their prime.
So wrinkled Age the faireſt Face will plow,
And caſt deep furrows on the ſmootheſt Brow.
Then where's that lovely tempting Face? Alas!
Your ſelves would bluſh to view it in a Glaſs.

If then thou delighteſt in Beauty (O my Soul) chuſe that which is laſting. There is a Beauty that never fades, even the Beauty of Holineſs upon the inner Man; this abides freſh and orient for ever, and ſparkles glorioufly when the face (the Seat of natural Beauty) is become an abhorrent and loathſome Spectacle. Holineſs enamme

ennammels and ſprinkles over the face of the Soul with a Beauty, upon which Chriſt himſelf is enamour'd; even Imperfect Holineſs on Earth is a Roſe that breaths ſweetly in the bud; in Heaven it will be full blown, and abide in its prime to all Eternity.

MEDIT. VII.

Upon the tenderneſs of ſome choice Flowers.

HOw much care is neceſſary to preſerve the Life of ſome Flowers? They muſt be boxed up in the Winter, others muſt be covered with Glaſſes in their ſpringing up, the fineſt and richeſt mold muſt be ſifted about the Roots, and aſſiduouſly watered, and all this little enough, and ſometimes too little to preſerve them, whilſt other common and worthleſs Flowers grow without any help of ours; yea, we have no leſs to do, to rid our Gardens of them, than we have to make the former grow there.

Thus ſtands the Caſe with our Hearts, in reference to the motions of Grace and Sin. Holy thoughts of God muſt be aſſiduouſly watered by Prayer, earthed up by Meditation, and defended by Watchfulneſs; and yet all this is ſometimes too little to preſerve them alive in our Souls. Alas! the Heart is a Soil that agrees not with them, they are tender things, and a ſmall matter will nip and kill them. To this purpoſe is the Complaint of the Divine Poet.

Who would have thought a Joy
so coy,
To be offended so,
and go
So suddenly away?
Hereafter I had need
take heed.
Joys among other things
have wings,
And watch their opportunitis of flight,
Converting, in a moment, day to night.

Herbert.

But vain Thoughts, and unholy Suggestions, these spread themselves, and root deep in the Heart, they naturally agree with the Soil; so that it is almost impossible at any time to be rid of them. 'Tis hard to forget what is our Sin to remember.

MEDIT. VIII.

Upon the strange means of preserving the Life of Vegetables.

I Observe that Plants and Herbs are sometimes killed by Frosts, and yet without Frosts they would neither live nor thrive; they are sometimes drowned by Water, and yet without Water they cannot subsist; they are refreshed and cheared by the heat of the Sun, and yet that heat sometimes kills and scorches them up. Thus lives

lives my Soul, Troubles and Afflictions ſeem to kill all its Comforts; and yet without theſe its Comforts could not live. The Sun-blaſts of Proſperity ſometimes refreſh me, and yet thoſe Sun-blaſts are the likelieſt way to wither me: By what ſeeming Contradictions is the Life of my Spirit preſerved? What a Myſtery? What a Paradox is the Life of a Chriſtian?

Welcome my Health, this Sickneſs makes me well:
Med'cines adieu:
When with Diſeaſes I have liſt to dwell,
I'll wiſh for you.
Welcome my Strength, this Weakneſs makes me able,
Powers adieu:
When I am weary grown of ſtanding ſtable,
I'll wiſh for you.
Welcome my Wealth, this loſs hath gain'd me more:
Riches adieu:
When I again grow greedy to be poor,
I'll wiſh for you.
Welcome my Credit, this Diſgrace is Glory:
Honours adieu:
When for Renown and Fame I ſhall be ſorry:
I'll wiſh for you.
Welcome Content, this Sorrow is my Joy:
Pleaſures adieu:
When I deſire ſuch Griefs as may annoy,
I'll wiſh for you.
Health, Strength, and Riches, Credit and Content,
Are ſpared beſt ſometimes, when they are ſpent.
Sickneſs, and Weakneſs, Loſs, Diſgrace, and Sorrow
Lend moſt ſometimes, when moſt they ſeem to borrow.

And if by these contrary and improbable ways, the Lord preserves our Souls in Life, no marvel then we find such strange and seemingly contradictory motions of our Hearts, under the various dealings of God with us, and are still restless in what Condition soever he puts us; which restless Frame was excellently expressed in that Pious Epigram of Reverend *Gataker*, made a little before his Death.

I Thirst for Thirstiness, I weep for Tears;
Well pleas'd I am to be displeased thus:
The only thing I fear, is want of fears;
Suspecting I am not suspicious.
I cannot chuse but live, because I die;
And when I am not dead, How glad am I?

Yet, when I am thus glad for sence of Pain,
And careful am lest I should careless be;
Then do I grieve for being glad again,
And fear, lest carelessness take care for me.
Amidst these restless thoughts, this rest I find;
For those that rest not here there's rest behind.

Jam tetigi portum valete.

FINIS.

B M

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